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JOSIAH WEDGWOOD AND HIS POTTERY

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JASPER BOWL

Height 3 in., diameter $6\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

JASPER BOWL

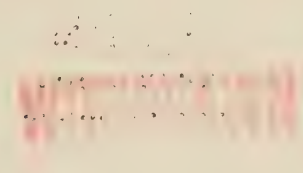
Height 3 in., diameter $7\frac{1}{8}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

JOSIAH WEDGWOOD AND HIS POTTERY

BY
WILLIAM BURTON
M.A., F.C.S., etc.

With 32 Colour and 72 Black-and-White Plates



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PREFACE

To tell over again the life-history of Josiah Wedgwood and his work in pottery, work which appears to me more varied and comprehensive than that of any other man, and to give some account of his labours for the public good which, during his later years, absorbed so much of his time and strength, can only be a labour of love for one who has been actively engaged in the potter's trade for the best part of a lifetime.

The field which this book attempts to cover has been well surveyed and explored by many writers during the last fifty years, for the career of this notable Englishman and the far-reaching influence of his work have attracted attention and appreciation that are almost world-wide. Such merit as this work may claim may, I hope, be found in its clear and simple survey of Wedgwood's work as a potter and organizer of labour in pottery-making, and in the consideration of the relations which his personal doings bore to the expansion of the industry and the activities of the principal contemporary potters in North Staffordshire. This aspect of the history has been specially treated in a chapter which describes the achievements of his chief colleagues and rivals in the trade, and exhibits Josiah Wedgwood as the leader of this important movement. At the same time it sets forth what is known of the work of other potters who

deserve to be held in honourable remembrance for their contributions to the art of pottery in Staffordshire.

It is but natural that, in the compilation of such a work, I should recall, with pleasure, my association with Etruria where, for five years, I served as chemist to the firm of Josiah Wedgwood and Sons, and imbibed my love of the craft with my first experience of its practice.

My warmest thanks are gratefully recorded to a number of friends who have given me their help, without stint, in the labour necessarily involved in the completion of such an engaging task.

WILLIAM BURTON

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LONDON, W.2.

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HEAD OF PLATO

White jasper

Length $11\frac{1}{2}$ in., width $8\frac{3}{4}$ in.

Falcke Collection, British Museum.



JOSIAH WEDGWOOD AND HIS POTTERY

CHAPTER I

BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION

NO title of honour was ever more fully earned or justly deserved than that of "Master Potter" bestowed, by general acclaim, on Josiah Wedgwood, of Burslem, who founded, in middle life, the world famous works at the village he built and christened "Etruria," some two miles north of Stoke-on-Trent, but actually on the important old road that ran across England from the towns of the Severn valley by way of Market Drayton, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Leek and Sheffield to Hull, and by way of York to Newcastle-on-Tyne. Here, the business of pottery-making in innumerable branches and styles has flourished exceedingly, until a catalogue of its productions would fill a goodly volume, while its influence on the doings of contemporary potters was almost world-wide. Through all the years from its foundation, in 1769, this place has been renowned both for its ceramic triumphs and for the civic and scientific labours of a succession of able, if eccentric, men with a decided streak of genius, who have guided its destinies during the century and a half of prosperity and renown which it has already enjoyed, and of which, happily, no man can see the end.

The spirited and self-reliant class of English yeomen may have vanished, but its representatives during the eighteenth century drove a deep and abiding furrow through the broad field of English life and enterprise.

Lancashire, Yorkshire, Derbyshire and Staffordshire can boast a long roll of honoured names in this connexion, and the virtues of the class were most admirably exemplified by such famous families as the Peels, the Arkwrights, and the Wedgwoods. These families, notable for their women no less than for their men, were not only of importance in themselves, but circumstances enabled them to impress the full force of their character and of their ideas, as with a stamp, on that great, transitional, economic movement by which the older home and village industries were transplanted to organized factories where men, women, and children were trained in specialized occupations, so that they became cogs in the wheels of a machine—just as had happened, to an even greater degree, in China many centuries earlier. The wild moorland district of North Staffordshire, then a remote and inaccessible tract of country with rough and miry lanes avoided by the stage-coaches, claims many an honoured Astbury, Twyford, Warburton, Wedgwood, Wood and Turner; and among all these the Josiah Wedgwood who founded Etruria became the leader and chief. The history of the Wedgwood family has been freely and admirably written—with documents, deeds, letters, and everything relevant to the subject—by a living member of the family, and this valuable work¹ is such a mine of reliable information for all students

¹ "A History of the Wedgwood Family," by Josiah C. Wedgwood, M.P. London: The St. Catherine Press, Ltd., 1908.

of the by-ways of North Staffordshire history, and the growth of its industry, that we may commence our account at once with the history of the most famous European potter of his time and of this enduringly vital family.

Josiah Wedgwood came of a stock that had long practised the simple pottery-making current in the district, while some of his father's relatives had become well-known and comparatively wealthy from the operations of the various works they managed or controlled in the town of Burslem, which prides itself on being the "mother-town" of the local pottery industry. He was born in the master's house at the Churchyard Works of that town, and his baptismal register of July 12, 1730, is still preserved. His father was not a wealthy manufacturer, though he was evidently in comfortable circumstances, and the young Josiah received only such scholastic education as was general in his class; though even here his share seems to have been somewhat meagre, for when his father died, in 1739, he was taken from school to work in the factory by his elder brother, Thomas, on whom the management of the family affairs appears to have devolved. He was apprenticed to this brother, in the customary way, for a period of five years from November 11, 1744.¹ In 1747 he suffered from a virulent attack of small-pox, which not only enfeebled him for some years but left him with a troublesome affection of the knee, so that in 1768, more than twenty years later, his right leg had to be amputated above the

¹ The indentures of this apprenticeship are to be seen in the Hanley Museum. They are printed *in extenso* in the volumes on Wedgwood written by Miss Meteyard and Ll. Jewitt.

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knee. Fortunately, a strong constitution and great natural fortitude enabled him to pass triumphantly through all these ailments and their attendant depression, so that many writers have seen in this affliction one of the determining factors of his later eminence, for he was, thereby, impelled to perfect himself in the less laborious branches of the trade, and so he acquired that dexterity in the craft of making and fitting handles and spouts to jugs and teapots ("stouking," as it was called in those days), which paved the way to the more highly skilled branches of the potter's work, such as block-cutting and modelling. He became an expert workman in all these callings, and thus extended and perfected his knowledge as a practical potter to a degree shared only by his most eminent contemporaries—for this was a time when the master-potter could, if necessary, perform any operation reasonably well—and was an excellent craftsman in many branches of his industry.

After a few years, Josiah Wedgwood left the employment of his brother and entered into partnership with a tradesman named Harrison,¹ of Newcastle-under-Lyme, and they occupied a works on Cliff Bank, which overlooks the town of Stoke-on-Trent from the road that climbs up to Hartshill on the way to Newcastle-under-Lyme. Cliff Bank at this time housed quite a little nest of potteries, and there Harrison and Wedgwood, or Harrison, Wedgwood and Aldersea, as the firm is often called, appear to have made the white and blue salt-glaze pottery, then at the height of its fame, together with the various clouded, mottled and tortoise-shell

¹ This Harrison is believed to have been a descendant of Major-General Harrison, of Cromwell's "New Model."

wares which formed one important branch of the general earthenware trade at that day.

Wedgwood had only worked at this factory at Cliff Bank for about two years (1752-4), when he entered into partnership with Thomas Whieldon, of Fenton, the most famous potter of the time in Staffordshire for technical skill and knowledge of the trade. This fortunate association, invaluable in the education and to the rising reputation of the younger man, was advantageous to both parties, for Whieldon was an extremely skilful potter who possessed established connexions with the Birmingham metal-mounters and silversmiths, while Wedgwood had an inexhaustible fund of energy, and was already winning a reputation for his ceaseless experiments—a passion he nourished to the end of his life. Tradition avers that Wedgwood proved too enterprising in business and too fond of experiments to be quite comfortably yoked with his senior partner; but they appear to have dissolved their partnership, with mutual esteem and goodwill, about the end of 1758. In confirmation of this date there is an existing memorandum of agreement, dated December 30th, 1758, in which Wedgwood engaged his cousin Thomas, then employed at the Worcester China Works, to serve him as a journeyman-potter for five years from that date.

At the opening of the year 1759, when Wedgwood was in his twenty-ninth year, he commenced his independent career as a master-potter by leasing from his distant cousins, John and Thomas Wedgwood, of the Big House, Burslem (who had been important manufacturers there for more than twenty years), a portion of their works in the Burslem market-place. This works

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was known as the Ivy House factory,¹ and became famous as the scene of Wedgwood's first independent venture as a manufacturer; though in a few years he also leased a larger works in the vicinity, called the Bell Works, and at these two small factories he laid the foundations on which all his later manufacturing enterprises were so solidly built up.

At this date the pottery industry of North Staffordshire—rapidly as it was growing in extent, variety and reputation—was still conducted by methods and appliances that seem almost primitive in their simplicity. Open pits lined with large stones were used for tempering and blending the clay mixtures, while wind and sun were the only drying agents, so that the year's supply of potter's clay had to be prepared during the warmer months. Slip-kilns, for drying the fluid mixtures to the necessary consistency by the heat of a coal fire, were just coming into vogue, and the materials for the jasper, black-basalt and other bodies, so extensively used by Josiah Wedgwood, are still prepared at Etruria as they were when work was commenced there. It would be impossible, I imagine, to mention another family of like distinction that has clung so tenaciously to the working methods of its founder and has striven, despite all the chances of time and fate, to adhere to the guiding principles enunciated by any potter, however eminent.² The liberality of the family has always granted to students the privilege of visiting this living survival of an eighteenth-

¹ In local parlance a pottery works was, and still is, called a "pot-bonk," i.e. pot-bank, for the site was generally levelled with the accumulations of waste from the kilns.

² The closest parallel would, perhaps, be found in the devotion of the successive chiefs of Sèvres to the life-work of Brongniart.



SAUCE-BOAT AND COFFEE POT

Agate ware. ? Whieldon period

Coffee Pot—Height $5\frac{1}{4}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum. Formerly in Enoch Wood Collection.

century factory, and the old works, now surrounded by the successive extensions which have grown up about it during a century and a half, together with the Wedgwood Museum of recent foundation, is a shrine of pious pilgrimage for potters and students from the ends of the earth.

It is to the enduring credit of Josiah Wedgwood that while he was industriously building up his own position as a manufacturer, he threw himself with all the energy of his disposition into every sensible scheme that was proposed for the improvement of the district in which he lived and worked. It was imperative that better means of communication should be constructed both between the pottery towns themselves and with the important centres of English commerce; especially with the port of Liverpool, which was entering on its career of rivalry with Bristol for the trade with Ireland and with America in which it finally conquered by reason of its proximity to the thriving industrial regions of Lancashire and Yorkshire. The port of Chester had for many centuries been an important centre in the coast-wise traffic of the western side of Britain, as well as with Ireland, and at this time the plastic Devonshire clays, shipped from Bideford, were always spoken of as "Chester Clays," for they were carried from that port into Staffordshire by pack-horses in the usual way; just as at a later period "cawk," the mineral sulphate of barytes, was brought from the lead mines of Derbyshire for the manufacture of the "jasper" wares of Wedgwood and his contemporaries. The leading pottery manufacturers must have found these slow and difficult methods of transit for materials and goods a great hindrance to the

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development of their trade, so that the success of a few recently constructed canals, especially that made by the Duke of Bridgwater from his coal mines at Worsley to the river at Manchester, gave rise to a canal fever in several industrial centres in England mildly comparable to the railway fever which raged some eighty years later. The advantages which canal barges offered over pack-horses and carriers' wagons were so obvious that it is easy to understand why a number of the principal manufacturers in Staffordshire, backed by the political influence of the Gower family, who were the owners of extensive estates in the county, should have zealously striven to further the "Staffordshire Canal" project.

Wedgwood acted as treasurer of the canal undertaking, a signal evidence of his growing wealth and his importance in the district; but he also seems to have played the most important individual part in the successful completion of the project. He devoted both his money and his time to the canal, and, incidentally, this public work proved of advantage to his manufactures, as it spread the repute of his pottery and secured valuable friendships for him among the county families, who were to become his first influential patrons. With his active and distinguished mind he was soon a notable figure in the county, and such reputation as he gained in this way, supported as it was by the excellence and variety of his manufactures, was a legitimate triumph for one who owed his success largely to his own courageous and enterprising spirit.

Having thus cleared the ground with this brief historical survey, we may fitly proceed to consider the



SIR WALTER RALEIGH

Black basalt. (Circa 1780)

Height $17\frac{3}{8}$ in., width $9\frac{3}{8}$ in.

Falcke Collection, British Museum.

ceramic triumphs which brought Wedgwood such high and undiminished repute. His ideals, which were those in highest favour at the time, are in many ways remote from those of to-day. The passion for Greek vases, which was natural enough when the excavations in Southern Italy brought such things vividly before the modern world by their virtual resurrection, has been replaced by a belief in the superiority of Oriental porcelain as the fullest expression of the potter's art and skill. Wedgwood's virtues as a master who created some of the finest models of practical utility combined with elegance that are known in all the long history of the potter's craft will, however, always remain as a heritage and an inspiration to those of his countrymen who strive to create, as he did, objects of beauty for everyday use.

CHAPTER II

THE EARLY CONDITIONS OF THE POTTERY INDUSTRY IN STAFFORDSHIRE

IN order that we may arrive at a sound and just appreciation of Josiah Wedgwood's labours and achievements as a potter and disentangle his especial contributions to the fictile arts from those which are due to other active members of the busy and inventive community into which he had been born, it seems advisable that we should review, at least in their broad outlines, the general conditions under which the industry was carried on in North Staffordshire before the sweeping changes and innovations of the mid-eighteenth century, in which he played such a distinguished part, revolutionized the methods and conditions of the manufacture of pottery and porcelain in England.

Less than fifty years before Josiah Wedgwood was born the wide region which has so long been distinguished emphatically as "The Potteries" was a wild and isolated tract of country, supporting only a sparse and scattered population. This was mostly grouped, as if for protection, in the more cultivated plots about the old churches and the remains of a few monastic buildings and their granges and farms, or dwelt apart in the more remote dells and nooks of the wild, rolling moorlands which extended to the north of Stoke-on-Trent. By the time Wedgwood was fifty years of age the district had gained

VASE

Painted in encaustic style

Height $13\frac{1}{2}$ in., diameter $6\frac{1}{4}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.



Early Conditions of the Pottery Industry 11

a reputation throughout the civilized world as the most important centre of pottery manufacture in these islands ; for, in addition to supplying the needs of our own population, in every class, by its neat and eminently practical and serviceable earthenwares, it had entered upon an important and rapidly-expanding overseas trade with our kinsfolk abroad and with all the countries of Europe—even with those which could boast of old-established pottery industries of their own.

Throughout the Middle Ages, such simple pottery as was made in England seems to have been manufactured mainly by the tilewrights and potters who were attached to the various monastic establishments, and it is possible that at the dissolution of these institutions a considerable number of such craftsmen were set free and had to work on their own account—finding their patrons or regular customers among the general public as best they could, and, in most cases, sinking lower and lower in the scale of existence and of craftsmanship. Almost certainly, this was what happened in the districts surrounding Reading, Bristol, Malvern and Worcester, as well as in North Staffordshire (where the remains of Hulton Abbey, lying between Burslem and Hanley, long testified to its ancient importance). In this last mentioned region the pottery industry seems to have suffered from a lingering decline after the dissolution of the monasteries. The fact that it was not enumerated among the local trades and industries by so minute and careful an observer as Leland, though he traversed the district in 1537, and that it was not mentioned in Speed's list of "Shire Products" in 1625, would seem to suggest that until about the middle of the seventeenth century the making of

pottery was not developed in North Staffordshire to a more notable extent than happened in many other parts of England where suitable clays could be easily found, together with abundant wood-fuel to burn the crockery. Some time before the middle of that century much greater developments appear to have taken place, for the increasing scarcity of wood revealed the importance of the coal that could be so readily worked from the "outcrops" on the hillsides or in the numerous "cloughs," along with the accompanying coal-measure clays, which were in themselves sufficient for the manufacture of such elementary kinds of pottery as were in common use.

Throughout this period, and even to that of the construction of the turnpike roads in Wedgwood's lifetime, the district remained a remote, almost an isolated one, for the existing roads which intersected it were little better than narrow, miry lanes scored with ruts and holes, where wheeled vehicles floundered from one impediment to another. The usual method of conveyance for goods, coals and clays of every kind was in the panniers of pack-horses or galloways, which generally travelled in strings or groups so that their drivers could assist each other to overcome the difficulties and mischances of the way; while wandering "cratemen" or pedlars vended the finished crockery through the neighbouring counties, wandering from farmstead to farmstead, or attending the numerous markets and fairs. By such means the fame of Staffordshire crockery was spread abroad, and it gradually displaced all those local wares of the rougher kind which had hitherto served the needs of the countryside in the west of England and the adjacent parts of Wales.



LAMP AND COVER

Black basalt

Height $13\frac{3}{4}$ in., diameter of bowl $7\frac{3}{8}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

Early Conditions of the Pottery Industry 13

Fortunately, Dr. Robert Plot, the keeper of the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, who was an eager naturalist and observer, has left us an interesting and invaluable account of the conditions of the industry as they came under his notice in the course of a progress through the district, which is recorded in his history of Staffordshire, published in 1686.¹ This account may be, appropriately, summarized here, not only for the accuracy of its descriptions, but because it is the only first-hand account of such matters that we possess. He records that the various clays were prepared by spreading them abroad in heaps, in their hard condition, just as they were got from the coal-mines or from the outcrops of the seams where they were mined along with the coal. Here, they were fully exposed to the slow, recurrent action of sun, wind, rain and frost; for they were left out in the open during two or three seasons, and were turned over at intervals so as to expose fresh surfaces, a process known as "weathering." The next step was to throw a quantity of this softened, "weathered" clay into a pit, sunk in the ground and lined with slabs of fired clay or with flagstones quarried from the neighbouring hills, which served to support the sides of the pit and preserved the clays from contamination by the soil. In this pit the weathered clays were mixed with water into a fluid by agitating the clay and water with a long wooden paddle carrying a cross-piece at the top which was gripped by the labourer. After a vigorous agitation, or "blunging" as it was called, the mixture was allowed to stand for a little

¹ Plot, R. (Dr.), "Natural History of Staffordshire." London, 1686. A summary of this account will be found in the "Jermyn Street Museum Catalogue," pp. 100-1.

time, so that the stones, gravel, and hard, unweathered particles sank to the bottom of the pit, while the fluid which contained the fine particles of clay, in suspension, was ladled off and poured through a hair-sieve into a large shallow tank called the "sun-kiln." Here it was left exposed to the sun and wind until the mass slowly dried to such a consistency that it could, finally, be cut out in blocks and stored in a damp cellar to "age" in preparation for the work of the "thrower" or "presser," who shaped it on the potter's wheel or in moulds, and, after it had dried sufficiently, smoothed and finished the vessels or affixed handles and spouts, while a further slow drying completed the clay-work.

Lead ore, in the form of galena, the native sulphide of lead, brought from neighbouring Derbyshire or from North Wales beyond Chirk and Wrexham, was the principal ingredient of the glaze. It was roughly pounded to a coarse powder, which was tied up in a bag of "butter-cloth" (i.e. coarse muslin) and dusted thickly over the surfaces of the clay vessels. These coated vessels were placed in the fireclay saggars, which protected them in the kiln; during the firing the powdered lead ore was gradually roasted to lead oxide, which, in its turn, melted and dissolved the outer skin of the clay vessel over which it had been applied. This solution of clay in lead oxide, a mixture of somewhat indefinite and variable composition, produced the yellow, treacly glaze, so that when the operation was finished there were the strongly-coloured yellow (buff), red or brownish pots, all complete. The articles which were, generally, made at this period, comprised few objects other than mugs, jugs, or pitchers and dishes (plates seem to have been a later addition, for



BLACK BASALT URN-SHAPED INKSTAND

Mark : Impressed "WEDGWOOD & BENTLEY"

Height $4\frac{1}{2}$ in.



RED TERRA-COTTA JUG

Fluted to imitate basket-work

Mark : Impressed imitation Chinese seal mark

Height $5\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

Early Conditions of the Pottery Industry 15

at this time wooden trenchers were mostly used instead), while the shapes given to these vessels were only of the simplest order—such as are common to most European countries during the early stages of pottery-making.

Such were the manufacturing conditions in the district long before Wedgwood's birth, and though we have the evidence of a few carefully made tygs and other drinking vessels that articles of better shape and finish were made to some extent, we believe that these were the exception rather than the rule—however interesting they may be as the precursors of better things. The marked improvements that are so evident in every branch of pottery-making in Staffordshire from the end of the seventeenth century have been generally attributed to the ferment caused in the district by the doings of two foreign potters, the brothers Elers. They had settled at Dimsdale Hall, an old manor house lying in a secluded spot among the trees of Bradwell Wood, off the main road which runs from Newcastle-under-Lyme to the North, and with an outlook across the wide valley on the east, through which the canal and railway now run, to Burslem Church on its commanding hill-top. Here they made such pottery as had never been seen before among the potters of the district; mostly, in small articles of table ware, such as teapots (with handles and spouts that were hand-made and not moulded), cups, small mugs and piggins for use as punch-ladles, in a fine, unglazed, red body or terra-cotta of beautiful tone and texture. No specimens of their manufacture have ever been found which bear names, dates or maker's marks, so that, in spite of excavations on the factory site and in its vicinity, we can only select from among

the early examples which are best authenticated as having been made in the district about this time, and say that some of them were probably made by the Elers, or by John Philip Elers, who is supposed to have been the potter.¹

Fine and delicate pottery of this order can have been little less than a revelation to the natives of the district, and a plentiful crop of legends has been handed down as to how these "foreigners" were spied upon in order to discover the secrets of such a superior manufacture. The old story goes that two local potters, Astbury and Twyford, by an assumption of dense stupidity, secured employment in their works and learnt the methods they used. Certainly the Elers left the district within a few years, probably about 1710, while the continued improvements which became manifest from this time were due to the labours of a number of potters who all bear well-known Staffordshire names and an undoubted pedigree.

Both Astbury and Twyford established little pot-works of their own in Shelton (the district between Stoke and Hanley), and there are two dull-black unglazed teapots still preserved in the Hanley Museum which were given by Enoch Wood more than a century ago, and vouched for, by him, as the work of Twyford. Astbury is known to have travelled to London and other important centres to dispose of his pottery to the best advantage, and he was, by all accounts, one of the pioneers in this method of increasing the demand for his wares.

¹ This was the mature opinion of Professor Church as expressed in his "English Earthenware" (Victoria and Albert Museum Handbooks), and we are still in the same condition of imperfect knowledge.

COVERED SUGAR BASIN

Green glaze with modelled sprigs, gilded

Height 4 in., diameter $4\frac{3}{8}$ in.

Fitzhenry Gift, Victoria and Albert Museum.

TEAPOT

Green glaze with modelled sprigs, gilded

Height $5\frac{1}{2}$ in., diameter $4\frac{5}{8}$ in.

Fitzhenry Gift, Victoria and Albert Museum.



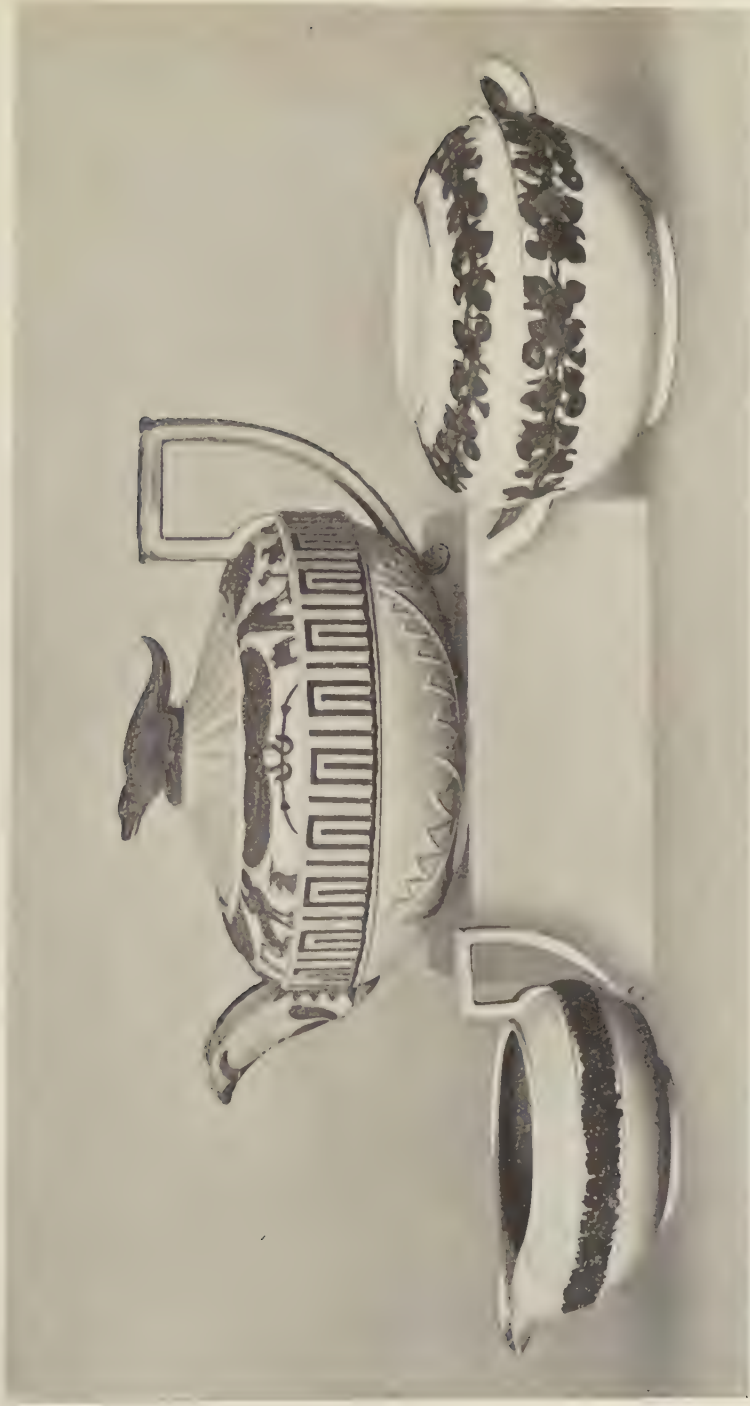
Early Conditions of the Pottery Industry 17

He is also believed to have been the first Staffordshire potter who imported the white-burning Devonshire clays ; which were mixed with fine white sand obtained locally, and applied as a slip-coating on the vessels made from the native buff and red clays. Simeon Shaw ascribes to Astbury the merit of the discovery that calcined flint was an excellent material to use in conjunction with many clays, especially for the manufacture of a hard white pottery (*circa* 1720). Josiah Wedgwood, writing much nearer to the time, awards the merit of this discovery to a potter named Heath, also working at Shelton, but, as is the case with many fundamental discoveries of the highest importance, we are never likely to learn the exact truth of this matter. The descendants of both Astbury and Twyford have continued the business of pottery-making in Staffordshire to the present time, and the site of the modern Twyford works, famed all the world over for its sanitary pottery of every kind, is only about half a mile from the Twyford factory to which reference has just been made.

For the names of the Staffordshire potters of this period, and especially of those who worked in the regions about Burslem, there is an interesting document, drawn up by Josiah Wedgwood in 1765,¹ which gives a list of the master-potters who were then at work in the districts of Burslem and Hanley, and mentions the kind of pottery which was made by each of the firms. In this document he also gives an illuminating estimate of the weekly costs and wages for a typical small factory, which is almost certainly based on actual experience, and he

¹ " Staffordshire Pottery and its History," Josiah C. Wedgwood, M.P. London : Sampson Low, Marston and Co., Ltd., 1913, pp. 48-53.

further states that, in 1715, there were 42 master-potters in Burslem, but not one of the whole number turned out more than £6 worth of goods in a week. The various kinds of pottery mentioned make up an interesting and somewhat amusing list, for along with a preponderance of "Black and Mottled" (about 20 factories in all), we have smaller sections who made "Brown Stone," "Stoneware and Freckled," "Stoneware," "Butter Pots," "Cloudy," and "Mottled." Such a list conjures up at once the rustic pieces which have formed the spoil of the late collectors of old Staffordshire pottery, and which have been so copiously illustrated and described by Mr. Solon, Mr. Hodgkin, Mr. Frank Falkner, Mr. C. J. Lomax, and other enthusiasts, during the last thirty or forty years. The indifference or contempt with which these fundamentals in the historical development of the industry were once regarded has been replaced by an active and painstaking curiosity which bids fair to resolve, once and for all, most of the difficulties about which men still dispute.



CREAM JUG

Terra-cotta (*rosso antico*). Red with black floral band
Height $2\frac{3}{8}$ in., length $4\frac{1}{16}$ in.

TEAPOT AND COVER

Terra-cotta (*rosso antico*). Red with black reliefs
Height 4 in., diameter $5\frac{1}{4}$ in.

COVERED SUGAR BASIN

Terra-cotta (*rosso antico*). Red with black reliefs
Height $2\frac{3}{8}$ in., width $5\frac{1}{8}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

CHAPTER III

THE IMPROVEMENT OF MANUFACTURING CONDITIONS IN STAFFORDSHIRE

IN attempting a survey of the career of an active and inventive man who was able, after his first successes, to gain almost universal fame by his various productions, it is almost natural to over-emphasize the importance of the work of his maturity, though this embodies all the knowledge so patiently gathered during his earlier years and before he is able to display the full range of his powers and resources. Such a course would be, particularly, out of keeping with the character of Josiah Wedgwood, who, throughout his eventful life, made the ground secure before he launched on each fresh and more ambitious exercise of his ability and organizing power.

There are few distinguished potters who have ranged over so wide a field, and still fewer who have displayed in all their doings such sound, good sense; a quality of mind which is pre-eminent in the work of this man, not only as a pottery manufacturer, but also in his public and private life. He never disdained or abandoned the successes of his earlier years as a potter, but continuously added some fresh application of the old methods, or some new invention of his own, as his knowledge expanded and his growing reputation brought him fresh opportunities for the display of his masterly skill.

A constant preoccupation of his mind, from the time of his settlement in Burslem as a manufacturer, was the imperative necessity that his workmen should be trained in more precise methods than such as served elsewhere, as well as in the use of improved machinery. He realized that the aid of machinery could be usefully applied in two directions : first, in replacing the exhausting and deleterious labour involved in pounding and grinding the hard materials and rocks used as prime constituents of the bodies and glazes of the pottery, as well as in the more perfect levigation of the various colouring oxides and their compounds ; and second, by effecting mechanical improvements which increased the precision of the potter's throwing-wheels and turning-lathes used in shaping and finishing the pottery before it was fired.

Dr. Plot's account of the methods in general use in the district, written some seventy years earlier, has been summarized in the preceding chapter, and it enables one to understand the conditions under which the industry was conducted before the changes which are under consideration here were introduced. So long as the industry remained a traditional family calling, where every member of the family took an allotted share in the work, while a few hired labourers—who usually worked for more than one master on different days in the week—provided the less-skilled labour, there was little possibility of any widespread introduction of mechanical appliances which would have displaced so much of this employment.

From the time of Josiah Wedgwood's immediate predecessors the primitive local customs which had prevailed when nearly all the workers were supposed

BLACK BASALT VASE

With encaustic painting
(1770)

Height $6\frac{3}{8}$ in.

British Museum.



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to be competent to carry out the various operations on a "pot-bank," and only the master-potter reserved to himself those special branches of the craft which called for particular training or skilled manipulation, were passing away. Increasing demands for more highly finished pottery, and the improving organization of the potter's methods, conspired to bring about a more distinct subdivision and narrower specialization of the work as a whole. Those workmen who attained any marked dexterity in some particular set of operations were retained, as much as possible, for such departments of the work, and by this time we begin to hear of workmen who are distinguished from the general ruck by always being spoken of as throwers, block-cutters, modellers, and so forth. The full results of these changes in organization were not revealed immediately, but they exercised a potent influence on the future course of the industry, and especially by a more definite subdivision of the various callings into a number of separate crafts, so that, for anything beyond the most ordinary crockery made from coarse clay by the simplest methods, no workman was any longer simply described as a "potter" — except in the general and indefinite sense in which any one engaged on a pot-bank may be loosely spoken of as a "potter."

This change, which had been slow and gradual throughout the seventeenth century, was somewhat quickened when improved tools and machinery were invented on the spot, or were adapted from those used in other manufacturing industries. The inventions of the Lancashire textile workers and machinists, and of the Birmingham workers in metals, bone and ivory, were to some extent

reflected in the pottery works of the country, while the situation of North Staffordshire between these two busy and thriving industrial centres, and its increasing trade relations with both, were calculated to bring about the introduction of fresh ideas in workshop methods and management. In the industries of the northern counties and of the midlands the use of machinery and the subdivision of occupations had progressed more rapidly than in the manufacture of pottery, though the more enterprising and energetic among the Staffordshire employers were, by this time, quick to seize on any hints that could be gleaned from either district for the improvement of their own methods.

It is, perhaps, significant that one of the first works Wedgwood could call his own had its name changed in the common parlance of the district, and was, henceforth, called the Bell Works, because he put up a resounding bell to call his workpeople to their labours, whereas it had been customary to summon them, if they were summoned at all, by repeated noisy blasts on a cow's horn.

The general body of workpeople in the potteries was slow to respond to such changes, and though we do not hear of the breaking of machinery and the burning of factories that occurred from time to time in other parts of the country, we know that old, ingrained customs are not readily changed, and opposition may be even more difficult to deal with when it is sullen and covert than if it becomes clamant and notorious. Throughout the district, all those manufacturers who were striving to improve the industry had these difficulties to face, though Wedgwood and his chief contemporaries soon



MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO

Black basalt on wooden plinth

Height $8\frac{1}{4}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

managed to grapple with them successfully, while those who neglected or failed to deal with them before they became acute disappeared from the scene, bankrupt in affairs as in progressive ideas.

It seems incredible that the first mill (a windmill ¹) for grinding calcined flint in water was only erected in 1758 at a place called the Jenkins, near Burslem, on some land which belonged to John Wedgwood of the Big House, where flints and other hard materials were ground in water instead of being crushed into dust by stone stampers worked by water-power. A few years later, when Josiah Wedgwood built his mill at the Etruria works, the grinding pans were driven by a steam-engine, one of James Watt's early "Sun and Planet" engines, made by Boulton and Watt at their Soho Works, near Birmingham, and this engine was still driving the grinding mills in the Etruria factory until a few years ago.

Lathes, for finishing and refining the round pottery shapes after they had been "thrown," had been in use in Staffordshire from the time of the Elers, who are sometimes credited with their introduction into the district; but there is ample evidence in Wedgwood's correspondence that he sought, far and wide, for improvements in the potter's lathes of his early years. He got his friend Bentley to translate foreign works on lathes and the practice of turnery, and they discussed and made experiments with many of the devices used for turning other materials, in order that they might improve their own machines and methods. Their cor-

¹ There is an amusing sketch of a proposed windmill sent to Wedgwood by Dr. Erasmus Darwin about 1768, in Miss Meteyard's "Life of Josiah Wedgwood," vol. ii., p. 29.

respondence about this time is full of suggestions and ideas relating to this branch of their manufactures, and when they met they were soon immersed in such books as they had secured and in plans and sketches of suggested improvements to their machines,¹ for precision and still greater precision of manufacture was Wedgwood's watchword, and all his productions show how true he was to his principles. What other manufacturers had regarded as trifling things and not worthy of serious attention, were soon shown in their true importance. He purchased a number of sets of scales and weights so that his throwers should weigh the balls of clay before they were used, and an approximate table of weights was drawn up for the principal standard articles; he had the scraps weighed daily in order to check waste and loss, and in addition he frequently had the finished plates weighed in lots, to see that they did not deviate from an approved weight. Here was a revolution, indeed, from the methods of his predecessors and of those contemporary potters who preferred the old casual ways.

At the same time he gave much thought and attention to improvements in his kilns and ovens, and expended much money and labour upon their construction so that the heat should be distributed, under control, as proved to be best in practice. It is difficult for anyone who has not had actual experience to realize the importance to a potter, especially to a maker of fine and expensive wares, of the proper construction of his kilns and ovens. I have known important factories where, owing to

¹ There is an account of these labours and studies in Miss Meteyard's "Life of Josiah Wedgwood," Chap. i., vol. ii.



MILK JUG

White stoneware with applied
vine leaf in green jasper
Height $5\frac{3}{4}$ in., diameter $3\frac{3}{4}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

TEAPOT

"Jasper dip," lilac ground,
white figures
Height $6\frac{3}{8}$ in., diameter $4\frac{5}{8}$ in.

MILK JUG

Lilac ground. Roman scroll
ornament and wreath of olive
leaves in white
Height $4\frac{7}{8}$ in., width $4\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Improvement of Manufacturing Conditions 25

defective construction or proportions, only about half the cubic space inside the oven could be relied upon for producing soundly fired pottery, and we may be sure that any such conditions would have proved intolerable to a manufacturer of the temperament of Wedgwood.

The effective kiln-space is always a measure of the capacity for production of the works as a whole, it is the bottle-neck through which everything must be poured, so that the utmost attention must be bestowed on such methods of construction and of firing as will yield reliable results over the maximum amount of firing-space, when reasonable care and skill are exercised by the fireman. With every improvement that is sought for in pottery manufacture these problems are of the first importance, as sound pottery can never be made unless it is sufficiently and consistently fired.

The limits of size which are practicable in potters' kilns and ovens are soon reached, and there are many legends of the disastrous consequences which ensued at some of the Staffordshire factories, when extra large ovens were built only to collapse at the height of the firing. If we may judge by the size of the hovels or cones surrounding the ovens which were built by Wedgwood at Etruria, some of which I have seen in use over 100 years after their erection, he and his bricklayers¹ had solved this question quite satisfactorily; and the green-glaze oven and the jasper-ware ovens at Etruria are still constructed on the plans that were perfected at

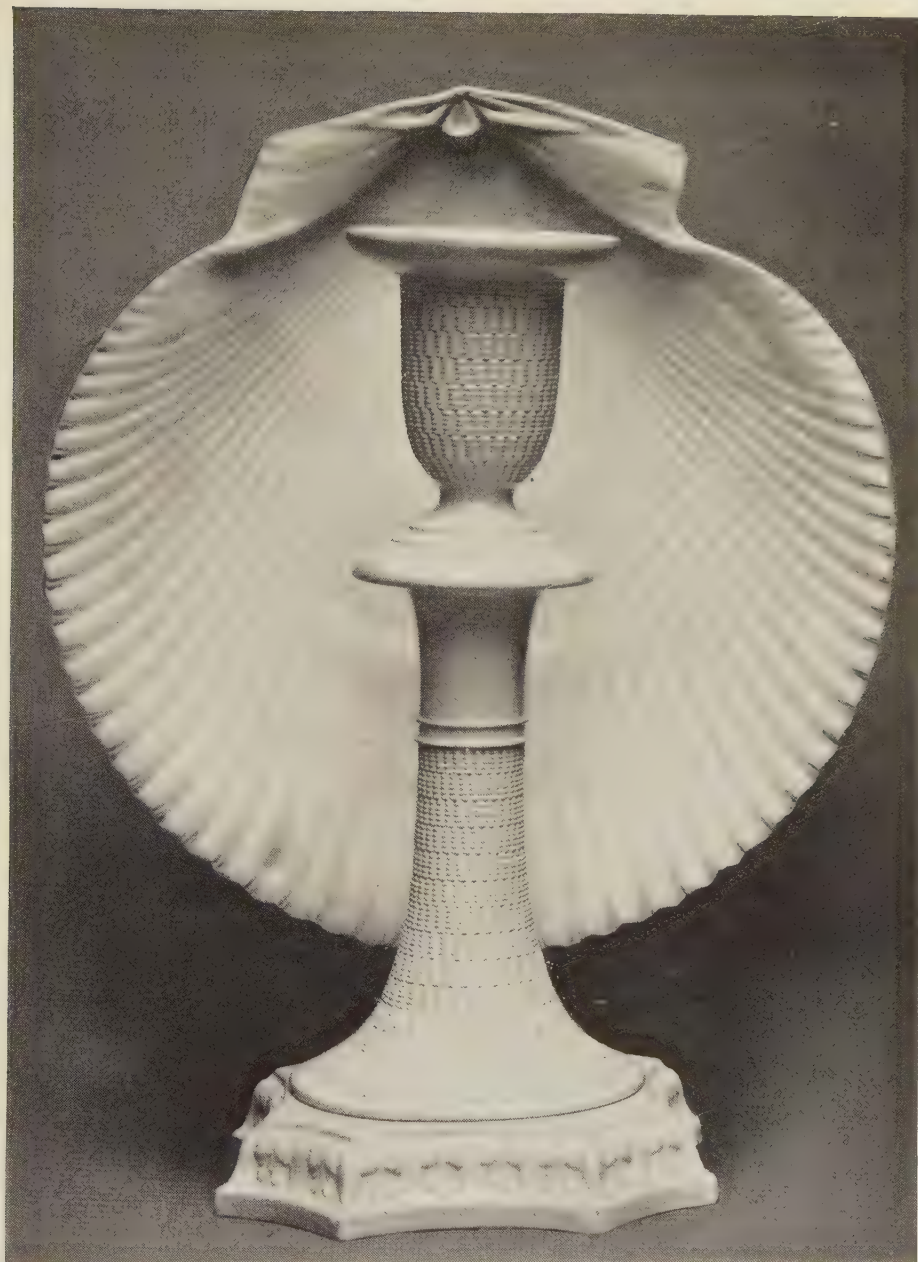
¹ There is a well-known cameo portrait in Wedgwood's jasper of Edward Bourne—"Old Bourne" as he is affectionately termed—who was the head bricklayer at the Etruria works.

this time — and not from mere conservatism or aversion to change, but on account of their excellence in use.

Two customs of the pottery trade which frequently puzzle outside observers may be mentioned here. The work of the operative potter is always reckoned in dozens, but this "potter's dozen" is an extremely variable number of articles. The technical "potter's dozen" seems to have been determined, originally, by the amount of space occupied in the ordinary sagger¹ (which is spoken of as the "common-height sagger," and used as the basis of reckoning) by a dozen full-sized dinner plates. It follows that small articles may be reckoned in any multiple of twelve, so that 24, 36, or even 144 pieces may be a dozen, commonly called the "long dozen" for that article, while large jugs, ewers, wash-hand basins, slop-pails, etc., would be reckoned as so many dozens each, according to the amount of sagger space they occupy. To this day, in any settlement of the potter's prices for making different articles, this question of the actual number of pieces which shall be reckoned as "the dozen" inevitably crops up afresh and is just as regularly haggled over.

Another difficulty which arises from the number of processes through which the pottery must pass to completion is the question as to whether the operative potter shall be paid for his work as "good from hand," that is, when it leaves him to be dried, and subsequently fired, or as "good from oven," that is, after it has been fired. The employers generally claim, with some justice,

¹ A sagger is the fireclay box or case in which pottery is fired in the "biscuit" or the glazing oven. It protects the pottery from the direct impingement of the flame and from flying bits from the oven walls.



FRUIT DISH

Cane Ware

Mark: Impressed "WEDGWOOD" and "V."

Length $8\frac{1}{4}$ in., width 8 in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

CANDLESTICK

Cane body. Glazed

Height $8\frac{1}{8}$ in.,
width at base $4\frac{1}{4}$ in.

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that many making-defects can only be detected after the piece has been fired, while the operative potter claims that defects due to careless firing are debited to him unfairly. Such problems of management as these will recur as long as the present system of pottery-making continues, and the squabbles arising from them often seem to be enjoyed by both sides, where each is eager to "best" the other, as they term it.

To return to our immediate history, Wedgwood could joyously experiment in new adventures and take risks with the best, but he retained throughout his career the keenest passion and delight in the manufacture of fine things, yet always with a clear sanity of outlook which is entirely admirable in a business man and perfectly in keeping with his distinguished order of mind, which touched few things that it did not adorn.

In the extensive use of a bright fresh green glaze on softly modelled ornament, Wedgwood, had he known it, was carrying on one of the oldest devices followed by the potter in all countries; for a similar use of bright green and yellow glazes occurs from the beginnings of glazed earthenware with almost every race of potters whose works are known to us. Many centuries earlier, such glazes were freely used in Egypt, Syria, Persia, China and Japan, and their unnamed makers were doubtless as proud of the gay effects they produced as the European potters of later times.

There is a traditional belief in the Staffordshire potteries which one likes to fancy might be true, that the bright green and yellow glazes which were so extensively used throughout the district in the eighteenth century were the firstfruits of Wedgwood's inventive-

ness, and his methods certainly mark a technical advance over those that had been followed in the production of the primitive "mottled," "cloudy" and "tortoise-shell" wares of Staffordshire, made before Wedgwood was born or while he was but a boy. In these the colouring oxides of iron, copper and manganese were dabbled, with a piece of rag or a sponge, over the surface of the shaped clay vessel before the application of the glaze. As the glaze melted during the firing it dissolved the patches of oxide if they had not been too thickly applied, and the glaze was strongly coloured to the required tint where the patches had been put. This rule-of-thumb method was, necessarily, uncertain in its results, for the surviving examples, which are probably typical of the best that were made, often display irregular, shiny-black patches or streaks where the glaze was not thick enough to dissolve all the colouring oxide. In the later examples, such as those of Whieldon and Wedgwood for instance, the finely ground oxides of iron or copper were mixed with the fluid glaze in definite proportions, so that the applied glaze contained the colouring matter before it was fired. This method has been generally followed since that date, though the composition of the glaze, and consequently the tone of colour produced, has varied from time to time with different makers; for within the space of a few years many potters were making similar glazed-ware in all the pottery towns.

Wedgwood's principal productions in the green-glaze pottery comprise various dessert services enriched with softly-modelled leaves and flowers or fruit (the vine and the water-lily were favourite patterns. *See* Plate facing this page), and these have continuously maintained their

DESSERT PLATE

Green glaze. Modelled water lily
Mark: Impressed "WEDGWOOD"

Diameter 9 in.

DESSERT PLATE

Green glaze. Modelled vine leaves
Mark: Impressed "WEDGWOOD"

Diameter 8½ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.



hold on popular favour in these islands as well as throughout Europe and America. In addition to the dessert services, he introduced for table decoration a number of models of tall candlesticks adapted from contemporary silversmith's work, and he also manufactured, in large quantities, various tea and coffee services in simple, elegant shapes which were often left quite plain, but more often, perhaps, seem to have been enriched with moulded or applied ornament.¹ Such applied ornament is frequently spoken of as "sprigged," whether it consists of floral, animal or human forms.

I have formed the opinion from the quantity of early specimens now to be seen in various countries, in the possession of private families, that this green-glaze earthenware, together with the "cauliflower" and "pine-apple" wares in which the same glaze also plays an important decorative rôle, must have formed the bulk of Wedgwood's early export trade, and we know that in later years the export trade with Europe and America grew to be an important and lucrative department of his total business. When we remember how popular such wares were in the British Isles also, it is easy to understand why they received so much attention at his hands both when he was working his factories at Burslem and after he had finally settled at Etruria.

Other decorative devices in which the various coloured glazes or coloured clays play the most important part had been extensively used in Staffordshire and were, by this time, common property, as they might well be,

¹ This applied or "sprigged" ornament was prepared by squeezing moist clay into intaglio moulds of plaster-of-Paris, or "pitcher," i.e., fired clay; a method which was afterwards used for making the "jasper" and other reliefs, formed in clay of one colour and applied to vessels fashioned from clay of another colour.

for they seem to be almost as old as glazed pottery, and have been adopted in almost every pottery centre of the Old World from remote ages. These are best exemplified by the "Tortoise-shell," "Marbled" and "Agate" wares which embody the final efforts in the methods used by the primitive slip-ware potters, where the work is carried to a pitch of elaboration, refinement and finish entirely in keeping with the aims and outlook of the eighteenth-century manufacturers. This truly decorative pottery, which smacks so strongly of the soil from which it grew, has always been able to command a widespread, popular appreciation, for it has been continuously manufactured by the Wedgwoods at Etruria, by other potters in different parts of England as well as by numerous potters throughout Europe.¹

As we might expect, many of the pieces in this style made by Josiah Wedgwood mark the limits of perfection in the methods used, for his numerous vases, bulb pots, inkstands, and other articles in this style display such skilful and patient dexterity in manipulation as is not to be surpassed (*see* Plates facing pp. 108, 152 and 160), though some of his contemporaries in Staffordshire have left us a great number of such pieces, some of which quite equal those made by Wedgwood in their skilled manipulation and perfect finish. Fortunately, the museums of London, Burslem and Liverpool, together with the Kaye-Cox Collection in the Whitworth Galleries at Man-

¹ Pottery of similar appearance and manufacture has been widely made in many countries. The methods have been handed down from the ancients, and there is little to choose in quality or manipulative skill between the productions of different countries, European and Asiatic. Many fine specimens exist which were made at Apt, near Toulouse, and this factory was, in 1802, in possession of the widow Arnoux, whose grandson, Leon Arnoux, was for fifty years the director of Minton's at Stoke-on-Trent.

CAULIFLOWER TEAPOT

Height $4\frac{1}{2}$ in.

PINEAPPLE TEAPOT

Height $4\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.



chester, contain a wealth of fine specimens made by various Staffordshire potters of the eighteenth century, so that they can be readily examined and compared by collectors and students of the present day; and they deserve the most careful examination.

That these productions were highly prized is proved both by the skilled labour that was lavished on their manufacture and by the care with which fine specimens have been preserved; for every ceramic museum in Europe contains examples of these Staffordshire "Agate" wares, and their quality is uniformly high. There is little to choose, as we have said, in point of skill or taste, between the pieces in this style which were made by Wedgwood and those made by Palmer and Neale, of Hanley. Wedgwood was, naturally, fully alive to all that was going on in the district, especially in a matter that concerned him so closely, but he was more generous minded than some of his biographers have been, for we find him writing to his partner, Bentley, in reference to some questions or remarks about Palmer's vases, "We (W and B) must be progressing, or they will be treading on our heels."

CHAPTER IV

THE WHITE AND CREAM-COLOURED EARTHENWARE

HAD Josiah Wedgwood produced no other kinds of pottery than his table wares in the perfected cream-coloured earthenware, or "Queen's Ware" as it was christened by permission of Queen Charlotte when he was appointed "Potter to the Queen," in 1763, he would still have been known to the world as an able and distinguished potter, for his plates and dishes, tureens and sauce-boats, cups and saucers, jugs, teapots and general table ware, made in such vast quantities in this particularly English material, have never been surpassed in that combination of utility with elegance which must always be regarded as one of the outstanding merits of his "useful" wares.

From at least the beginning of the eighteenth century the Staffordshire potters had been generally and continuously experimenting in the direction of white or light-coloured earthenwares, which they might offer as a reasonable substitute for the tin-enamelled faïence of Europe or the Oriental porcelains which commanded the patronage of the well-to-do. A considerable degree of success had already attended on these efforts, and, by the close of 1758, when Wedgwood returned to Burslem on the expiration of his partnership with Whieldon, such light-coloured earthenwares were already being manufactured, on an extensive scale, by quite a number



PERFORATED FISH-SLICE

Queen's Ware. With border in
green and brown enamel colours
Length $11\frac{1}{8}$ in., width $4\frac{3}{8}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

of firms located there, among whom the Warburtons of Hot Lane, Burslem, and the Baddeleys of Shelton were the chief, or at all events they are the best known.

A memorandum, written in red enamel-colour on the back of a large dish of Wedgwood's "Queen's Ware" by Enoch Wood of Burslem, who is so well known as a potter and as a collector of the early Staffordshire wares, is quoted in full in Professor Church's "English Earthenware,"¹ and may usefully be summarized here as it conveys some important information.

"The cream-colour ware was, at this time, composed of flint and clay only as the fine, white, salt-glaze ware was, and the glaze was compounded of flint and white or red lead, and the ware was fired in the accustomed way and manner as used for glazed tea-pots, tortoise-shell, mottled, agate and cauliflower. Also sand from the Mole Cop and Baddley Edge was used either in the body or glaze. N.B.—Before flint was introduced they used a certain proportion of slip for the body in the glaze to prevent crazing, and to make it bear a stronger fire in the glaze oven."

The name of the potter who discovered the value of the improvement mentioned in the last paragraph of this memorandum ought to be held in esteem, could we but have known it!

Fortunately, specimens of this early cream-colour earthenware are still plentiful, and they prove it to have been an excellent product, as anyone will perceive who takes the trouble to regard them attentively.

The final improvements in the composition of the body of the ordinary English earthenware followed on the importation into Staffordshire of the china-clay and china-stone discovered in Cornwall by William Cookworthy, the inventor of the Plymouth China, the

¹ "English Earthenware," by Sir A. H. Church, F.R.S., etc., p. 87. Handbooks of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

first hard-paste porcelain made in England. A patent for the use of these clays and rocks had been granted to Cookworthy in 1768, and it is unlikely that china-stone had been used in Staffordshire before that time, although china-clay from various places in England and abroad had, at least, been experimented with. When these various English materials—the ball-clays of Dorset and Devonshire, the china-clay and china-stone from Cornwall, and ground, calcined flint—were all available in unlimited quantities, the earthenware became more perfect and sound in body and more uniform in tint, while it received that superior finish, at the hands of well-trained workers, which first enabled North Staffordshire to secure its commanding position in the pottery world.

The fundamental importance of an unrestricted supply of these materials to the growing earthenware industry explains why the Staffordshire manufacturers, as a body, so vigorously opposed Champion's attempt to secure an extension of Cookworthy's original patent in 1775. All the important potters in the district united with this object, for the general progress of the industry was seriously threatened, and Josiah Wedgwood, with John Turner of Lane End (now Longton), was deputed, on their behalf, to oppose such an extension of the grant when the proposal was under examination before a committee of the House of Lords.¹ After the case had been heard Wedgwood and Turner journeyed together through Devon and Cornwall, and they secured a joint lease of

¹ It does not seem necessary to repeat all the arguments in this case. The subject has been referred to by every writer on the pottery and porcelain of the period, and the reader may be left to form his own conclusions as to the rights and wrongs of the matter.



COVERED CUP AND SAUCER

Cream colour, with enamelled pattern in red and brown

Cup—Height 4 in., diameter $3\frac{3}{4}$ in.
Saucer—Diameter $5\frac{3}{8}$ in.

*Given to Victoria and Albert Museum
 by Rev. C. J. Proctor.*

SAUCE-BOAT WITH ATTACHED STAND

Coloured border and farmer's implements

Mark: "WEDGWOOD"

Bowl—Height $3\frac{1}{8}$ in.
Tray—Length $8\frac{3}{4}$ in., width $6\frac{3}{8}$ in.

Schreiber Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.

CREAM JUG

Portrait of John Wesley
 printed in black

Height 5 in., diameter $3\frac{1}{4}$ in.

some extensive workings at St. Stephens, between St. Austell and Redruth, from which they were very soon able to ship china-clay and china-stone round to Liverpool, whence it was forwarded into Staffordshire; at first by pack-horses and, after some years, by the canal when that was completed. It was in this way that Wedgwood and Turner became merchants in these commodities, for besides amply supplying the requirements of their own factories they appear to have sold them to other potters in the district who could pay their price. It may be of some little interest to note that similar potter's materials are still conveyed by wagon from the canal wharves at Etruria Vale to the pottery works in Hanley and the district away from the canal.

When he had thus secured possession and control of abundant supplies of the best materials, Wedgwood was able to extend the production of his fine earthenwares with certainty. He already made the cream colour in a light and a darker shade, and, by the use of glazes containing different small proportions of oxide of iron, he began the regular manufacture of several darker shades of colour which have been spoken of as "saffron" and "straw colour" by many writers, though on the works, I believe, they have always been called "ivory" glaze (dark and light), while an intermediate tint is known as "Dysart" glaze, from the fact that an extensive service was made for the Earl of Dysart, who stipulated for a glaze of lighter tint than the ordinary "ivory."

Miss Meteyard quotes from a letter written by Wedgwood to his clerk or salesman, Cox, who was in charge of the London warehouse, and who had, as is evident

from the context, passed on to the works some of the complaints and faddy requests made by influential patrons :—

“ With respect to the colour of my ware, I endeavour to make it as pale as possible to continue it *cream* colour, and find my customers in general, though not every individual of them, think the alteration I have made in that respect a great improvemt, but it is impossible that any one colour, even though it were to come down from Heaven, shod please every taste ; & I cannot *regularly* make two cream-colours, a deep and a light shade, without having two works for that purpose.”¹

This, obviously, refers to an idea or suggestion that had been previously discussed that Wedgwood should manufacture two earthenware bodies, one perceptibly darker than the other, for the different shades of his cream-colour earthenware services, and we have just seen how this difficulty was, in practice, overcome by the use of one cream-colour body with a white glaze, and two or three lightly-tinted glazes to produce the different shades of colour in the finished ware.

The production of a “ white ” as distinct from the lightest shade of cream-coloured earthenware could no longer be postponed, and the result is to be seen in Wedgwood’s “ Pearl ” ware, which, though it was never manufactured on such a colossal scale as the cream-colour, demands notice here, for it was the precursor of those hard and durable white earthenwares of later times, variously known in the trade as “ Granite,” “ P.G.” (pearl-granite), or by some other trade name, which in the hands of such skilful manufacturers as the Maddocks, the Meakins, the Johnsons, and W. H. Grindley, have enabled the Staffordshire potters to extend their overseas trade in domestic pottery to an extent which

¹ “ Life of Josiah Wedgwood,” Eliza Meteyard (l.c.), vol. ii., pp. 67-68.



TUREEN AND STAND

Cream colour. Queen's Ware

Moulded in low relief

Mark: Impressed "WEDGWOOD"

Tureen—Height $6\frac{3}{8}$ in., length $11\frac{5}{8}$ in., width $8\frac{1}{8}$ in.

Stand—Length $14\frac{1}{8}$ in., width $11\frac{1}{8}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum. From Jermyn Street Collection.

would have given the keenest delight to Josiah Wedgwood.

This "pearl" ware, as Wedgwood made it, differed somewhat in composition from his cream ware, for it contained a larger proportion of ground flint and china-stone, while, to intensify its whiteness, a minute quantity of finely ground oxide of cobalt was added to the body-mixture, on the principle that causes a laundress to use her "blue-bag" in washing and getting up linen.

A minor branch of Wedgwood's activities which is often overlooked, both by writers and collectors, was his manufacture of those quaint and amusing "Toby jugs." These embodiments of the bucolic humour of the Staffordshire potters of his generation are too well-known to call for description here, but in any notable collection of such things some of the best examples will be found bearing the name Wedgwood, stamped under the base in the usual type of lettering found on his earthenwares, and these were undoubtedly made by the famous Josiah, either before he finally severed his connexion with Whieldon (another famous maker of such things), or while he was conducting his Burslem factories. They may fittingly be contrasted with such well-known Whieldon models as "The Squire," with its air of dignity and consequence, or "The Hearty Good-fellow," a subject which long remained in favour with many of the later makers of such things.

More ambitious figures and busts made in the earthenwares, both cream-colour and "pearl," are to be found in many private collections, while a number of large and splendid examples, some of which were formerly in the

Jermyn Street collection and are figured and described in its catalogue, are now preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum. When we consider the excellence of these earthenware figures, some of which are as much as 22 inches high, and are delicately tinted in enamel-colours, we are able to appreciate more fully the extent of the labours that must have been undertaken by Wedgwood before he entered on the production of his better-known figures and busts in basalt and jasper-body. Two admirable specimens of his productions in earthenware are illustrated in the Plates facing this page, a "Madonna and Child," of charming grace and tenderness, and a female bust entitled "Sadness," which seems to me curiously reminiscent of some of the Derby china figures modelled by Spengler.¹

Though these figures were illustrated in outline in the "Catalogue of the Jermyn Street Museum Collection" and by Sir Arthur Church in his "English Earthenware," I am glad to be able to direct attention to them afresh and to present illustrations which really show their merits, for they seem to be almost unknown except to devout "Wedgwood" students. Had they proceeded from one of the French or German factories, we should never have been allowed to forget them, for every writer on Continental pottery would have dwelt upon their merits, and would, probably, have used them as an illustration of the superior artistry of French and German work!

¹ I have been unable to discover that Spengler was either commissioned or employed by Josiah Wedgwood, but examples of his work at Derby would be sure to find their way into Staffordshire, and I suggest that in the modelling of these examples we have the handiwork of William Wood, at Etruria, enlarging and transforming Spengler's Derby figures.

MADONNA AND CHILD

“Pearl” Ware, enamelled

Height 13 $\frac{1}{8}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.



A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF SOME TECHNICAL MATTERS

The beautiful Staffordshire "salt-glaze," which had become one of the important branches of the industry when Josiah Wedgwood served his apprenticeship "to the art and mystery of Throwing and Handling," as the indenture runs, was undoubtedly a serious attempt on the part of this ingenious race of potters to produce a type of pottery which, by its pearly whiteness and its translucence, should bear some superficial resemblance to Oriental porcelain. Having no knowledge of the composition or methods of fabrication of the Oriental wares, and possessed only of such information as they had acquired by their own experiments, we may well believe that the potters who first manufactured a substance which was so white, translucent and delightful in surface texture as this white salt-glaze ware must have felt that they had solved the problem, when, as a matter of fact, they had only succeeded in producing an additional variety of pottery which was to enjoy a brief hour or two of popularity and repute ere its gradual disappearance before the conquering progress of the cream-coloured earthenware and the coveted porcelains of England, Europe and the Far East.

This white salt-glaze was first manufactured by mixing the whitest clays that could be obtained in Staffordshire and Derbyshire with finely-ground sand, as the so-called "crouch" ware of Nottingham was made, but afterwards it was mostly compounded from the South of England clays and sand, which gave a finer product. These highly siliceous clay-mixtures were sharply and thinly potted by stamping cakes of the material in metal

moulds, or, at a later time, by casting from fluid slip in moulds of plaster of Paris, and when they were glazed with salt, in the usual way, they produced a very beautiful white, glossy stoneware, which could be still further enriched by simple paintings in bright, raised enamel-colours in the style of the highly-esteemed *famille rose* porcelains of China. This was the type of pottery with which the Staffordshire potters first made their existence known in Europe, for the white salt-glaze found its way abroad to Holland, Germany, and the Scandinavian countries in considerable quantities, although its entire history, apart from a short period of lingering decline in England, is comprised within the eighteenth century, or a few years on either side thereof.

The Staffordshire "salt-glaze" of the best period is as thinly and elegantly potted as any chinaware, and its finely-granulated surface, recalling the chicken-skin texture of some of the Oriental porcelains, imparts a distinctive quality not only to the glaze itself but also to the superposed enamel-colours which, in the decorated examples, were painted upon it in palpable relief so as to enhance their brilliant purity of tone. It seems a matter for regret that such a beautiful material should have suffered from such grave practical defects when it was applied to articles for table use; but it was readily cracked when hot liquids were poured into it and its thin, sharp edges were easily chipped, so that after a brief period of popularity it gradually sank in importance and finally disappeared before the more durable and practical earthenwares and porcelains.

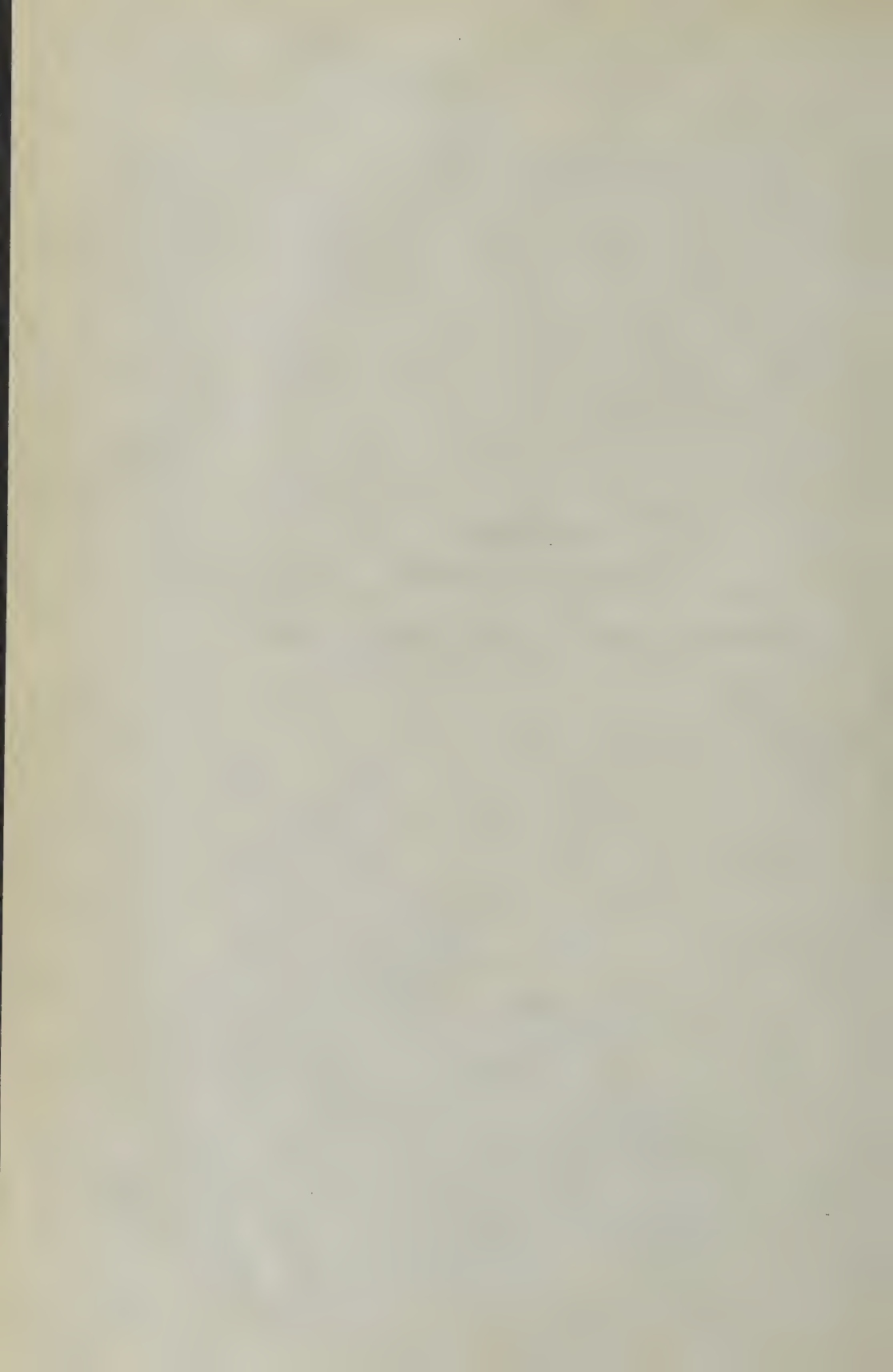
The ordinary white or lightly-tinted earthenwares, as they were perfected in Staffordshire by Wedgwood

"SADNESS"

Cream Ware, enamelled

Height $22\frac{1}{4}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum. (Formerly in the Jermyn Street Collection.)





and his compeers, are on an entirely different plane of achievement, for they possess such eminently practical qualities that their principal application has always consisted in the manufacture of table services, toilet ware, and the thousand and one accessories for household use, as well as for plant pots, bulb pots, and vases innumerable. For this important rôle they are admirably fitted by the neatness and cleanliness in appearance and finish, as well as the practicality of the forms in which they were made, and their power of enduring any reasonable amount of usage and wear; for they will withstand the handling of domestics better than the more costly porcelains. It is unfortunate that their moderate cost should too often serve to blind people to their practical excellences, for we cannot doubt that they would have received much greater consideration had they been more costly to obtain or difficult to replace.

The cream-coloured earthenware was originated as a definite species when the elder Astbury made his first pottery white throughout its substance, by mixing a due proportion of calcined and finely-ground flint with the white Devonshire ball-clays; his wares being glazed with powdered lead ore and finished at one firing for glaze and body in the usual way. His son, the second Astbury, used a mixture of white or red lead with flint finely ground together in place of the primitive lead ore or "galena" glaze of the district, but there was still only one firing of the pottery. In 1750, Enoch Booth, of Tunstall, introduced the plan of firing the clay articles to what is known as the "biscuit" condition as a first operation, and subsequently dipping these pieces of porous pottery into a fluid mixture of finely-ground

flint and white-lead suspended in water to be finished by a second firing at a lower temperature. In this way the "biscuit" pottery received a coat of the glazing materials in a perfect condition of fineness and intimate admixture, while a second firing, at a lower temperature than that needed to produce the "biscuit" ware, melted the glaze and fused it to the body, so that the pieces were thinly and evenly glazed all over. This process is said to have been first practised, on the commercial scale, by the Warburtons of Hot Lane, Burslem, and about the same time, or very soon after, by the Baddeleys, of Shelton, for these two families are reputed to have been the largest manufacturers of cream-coloured earthenware when Josiah Wedgwood settled at the Ivy House in Burslem, in 1759. Wedgwood's early cream-colour, including his Queen's Ware, was made in this way, and such primary methods seem to have been in general use in his factories until the introduction of "Greatbach's China Glaze," the precursor of the later types of earthenware glazes, about 1765.¹ The final improvements in the cream-colour and allied earthenwares came about, gradually, when the china-clay and china-stone of Cornwall were introduced into the body-mixtures of the Staffordshire earthenwares, some time after 1768. When it was once definitely established, the composition of the cream-coloured earthenware has remained practically unaltered to this day—the body of the ware consisting of mixtures of ball-clay, china-clay, ground flint and ground china-stone; while the glaze is compounded from a glassy frit (made by fusing borax, soda and a little potash, with china-clay, whiting and flint),

¹ See "English Earthenware," by Sir A. H. Church, F.R.S., etc., pp. 81-82.



EMBOSSSED DISH

Queen's Ware. With gold-
purple enamel colour

Length $8\frac{7}{8}$ in., width $6\frac{5}{8}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

CREAM COLOUR DISH

With "lag and feather"
pattern border

Length $8\frac{1}{2}$ in., width $7\frac{3}{8}$ in.

to which are added further quantities of china-clay, china-stone and flint, as required to produce a smoothly-working fluid glaze. In Wedgwood's hands this perfected light-coloured earthenware quickly became one of the most important articles of his trade, at home and abroad, for he exported it to the ends of the earth. Its uniform and delicate tint of cream-colour distinguishes it both from the "pearl" ware and from the various English porcelains; while by staining the glaze with small quantities of finely ground oxides of iron (*crocus martii* or ground smithy-scale being generally used for the purpose), deeper shades of ivory and his well-known "Dysart" glaze, an intermediate tint, were also manufactured.

CHAPTER V

USEFUL WARES

THE solid and enduring foundations of the businesses which Josiah Wedgwood developed so successfully, first at Burslem and afterwards at Etruria, will be found in the general excellence, durability and refinement of his "useful" pottery, a descriptive term which he may well have originated in this application, as it is so consistently employed throughout his correspondence to include all the varied pottery apparatus and utensils employed in the preparation and service of meals: the ewers, wash-hand bowls, soap dishes, sponge bowls and other adjuncts of the toilet table; together with all the multifarious accessories of daily life in the home, from pin-trays and trinket stands to the garniture of my lady's writing-table or the capacious and convenient inkstands, pen-trays, paper weights, taper-holders, wafer-boxes, and reading lamps that equipped the scholar's desk.

The fundamental excellence in material and manufacture, together with the suitability of shape and propriety in use of these expressions of Wedgwood's taste and skill, might have inspired the ideas which a modern philosophic writer, Benedetto Croce, expounds in his "Æsthetic":—¹

¹ "Theory of Æsthetic," translated by Douglas Ainslie. Macmillan & Co., Ltd., London, 1909, pp. 166-7.



TWIG BASKET AND STAND

Cream colour, picked
out in hair-brown

Basket—Height $2\frac{3}{4}$ in., length $9\frac{3}{4}$ in., width $7\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Stand—Length $10\frac{1}{2}$ in., width $8\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum. Bequeathed by Miss Ann Martyn.

“ Rustic dwellings and palaces, churches and barracks, swords and ploughs, are beautiful, not in so far as they are embellished and adorned, but in so far as they express the purpose for which they were made. . . . Plates, glasses, knives, guns and combs can be made beautiful; but it is held that their beauty must not so far exceed as to prevent our eating from the plate, cutting with the knife, firing off the gun, or combing one's hair with the comb.”

At the time when Josiah Wedgwood commenced to manufacture the usual kinds of Staffordshire pottery on his own account as an independent master-potter, in Burslem, table wares of excellent shape and proportion, which, as a rule, displayed bright and skilfully-painted decoration, had been manufactured for several centuries in Italy, France, Holland, and Germany, as well as in Spain, in the popular tin-enamelled faïence; while the earlier European porcelains were already well-established and famous. The English “ delft,” made with some considerable degree of success at Lambeth, Bristol, Liverpool, and a few other places, was an obvious and avowed imitation of some of these foreign wares, both in materials and in style; though, when the same processes were introduced into Staffordshire they met with indifferent success, for, by that time, the most enterprising and skilful potters of the district were busily engaged in other schemes of research and manufacture which seemed more in keeping with their native bent of mind.

By degrees, the comparative simplicity in manufacture and the superior durability of the Staffordshire “ cream-colour ” pottery set currents moving in the opposite direction, so that, in a little while, earthenwares, based on the English methods and produced from similar materials, were manufactured on a considerable scale at

a number of centres in different departments of France,¹ such as Lunéville, Bellevue near Toul, and Niderviller; while at a later date similar earthenwares were made at Longwy, Douai, Sarreguemines, Saint-Amand-les-Eaux, Montereau, Paris, Orléans, Bordeaux, and Apt, in Provence, to mention only the important centres in which it gained a permanent foothold. The whole subsequent course of the French pottery (as distinguished from the porcelain) industry shows the marked impress of the English methods and technique as they were imported at this time, and later in the eighteenth century—a partial liquidation of our indebtedness to France in other directions, notably in some of our early porcelains, such as those of Bow and Chelsea.

So much has been written about the foreign potters who brought fresh knowledge of their craft to England, that we may, not unfairly, dwell a little on the course of this reflux in the tide. A considerable number of workmen, possessed of the necessary skill and knowledge, but lacking means or opportunity to commence a works of their own in Staffordshire, passed over into France and with the support of French capitalists or of established pottery manufacturers, introduced the manufacture of earthenwares after the English fashion, either at factories which were already engaged in producing the tin-enamelled faïence or in new works specially erected for the purpose. Mr. Solon,² in an appendix to his famous book, “The Art of the Old English Potter,” has traced the history of some of these migrants from Staffordshire,

¹ See “The Old French Faïence,” by M. L. Solon. Cassell and Co., Ltd., London, 1903, pp. 113-116.

² “The Art of the Old English Potter,” by M. L. Solon. Second Edition. Bence & Sons, Derby and London, 1885.



SOUP TUREEN AND LADLE

Cream ware. Tureen with brown decoration.

Inscribed on lid "De Vriendschap" and "Amsterdam 1804 G"

Mark: Impressed "WEDGWOOD"

Height 9 in., diameter 12 in.

Schreiber Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.

whose lives were full of romance, though they generally served as the sport of Fortune in the end ; but we may recall, with advantage to our narrative, the doings of one or two of them whose sojourn in France left a permanent impress on the industry of pottery in that country.

Ralph Shaw, of Burslem, emigrated to France with all his family about 1735, and seems to have worked in several factories at Lille and its vicinity ; but, in 1775, he and a partner, William Clark or Clarke, of Newcastle-under-Lyme, were settled at Montereau (Seine-et-Marne) as makers of earthenwares, *in the English fashion*. They gave as a reason for settling in this place, when they applied for some privileges to the local authorities as the custom was, that they had found in the vicinity a white clay which was better suited to such manufactures than the clay used in England (!), and they were granted certain privileges as to customs and duties, as well as a small subsidy of 1,200 francs a year. Many years afterwards, viz., in 1810, this business was amalgamated with a similar one which had been founded about 1800 by M. de Saint-Cricq (Mr. Solon writes the name "Saint-Crick"), at Creil (Oise), and the joint enterprise still ranks among the important pottery-works of northern France, despite the wars and revolutions of the intervening years during which it has been held by various military or revolutionary forces at different times.

An item of considerable interest in the history of this factory at Creil is that transfer-printing was introduced from England for the decoration of the Queen's Ware and faïence made there, and this seems to have been the earliest adoption of the process on an extended

scale in France. Table services printed in black on-glaze, with views of towns, monuments and figures, in the approved English fashion, are well-known, so that one is forced to conclude that the engraved copper-plates had been taken over by the Englishmen. Mr. Solon expressed the opinion that the process was not thoroughly mastered at this time in France, as on the wares in question the impressions are pale and blurred and otherwise distinctly inferior to contemporary English printing on earthenware.

Having traced in some detail this particular instance of the transplantation of English methods and ideas abroad, the reader may be left to judge for himself what was the standing and repute which had been won by the Staffordshire earthenwares within a comparatively short period, when almost every country in Europe, from Sweden and Russia to Spain and Portugal, could show us similar instances of its successful adoption.

Josiah Wedgwood had died before this movement had spent its force, but the legacy of artistic and technical achievement associated with such names as his in pottery, with Hepplewhite in furniture, and with the brothers Adam in the building of domestic palaces, was a living force the energy of which was not fully spent for some few generations after 1800.

I would wish to emphasize again, for public acclaim soon dies away, the importance of Wedgwood's labours in the creation and dissemination of beautiful domestic pottery. I have no desire to minimize the value of his jasper ware, but it is as unfortunate as it is true that his efforts in this more ambitious field have, all too often, been allowed to overshadow the life-long

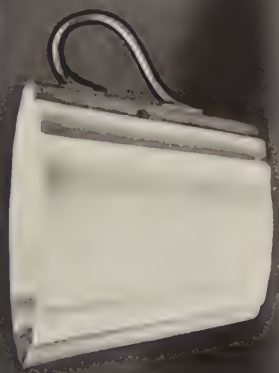


PUNCH-GLASS STAND

Cream colour

Height $8\frac{7}{8}$ in., diameter $7\frac{5}{8}$ in.

Presented by Mrs. Kate Bentley to the Victoria and Albert Museum.



"SILVER" SHAPE CUP AND SAUCER

Cup—Height 3 in.

Saucer—Diameter 6 in.



"BUTE" SHAPE CUP AND SAUCER

Cup—Height 3 in.

Saucer—Diameter 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.

care and attention he gave to the improvement and perfecting of his domestic earthenwares in "cream-colour" and "pearl" ware, and the outstanding importance of these labours as a permanent contribution towards the sum-total of English achievement in the finer arts of working in clay. He was one of the great pioneers in this direction, and the record of his doings in this field alone during his forty-five years of independent mastership are sufficient in themselves to proclaim his eminence among those craftsmen and masters-of-men whom the world cannot afford to neglect or ignore as the important and outstanding figures in the historical evolution of our modern industries.

Wedgwood's "useful" pottery comprises, as we have seen, articles of every type which were perfectly adapted to all the varied purposes of the times that pottery could fulfil, and a survey of all that he produced can only lead an impartial observer to one conclusion. He consistently aimed at a combination of usefulness and elegance in his varied manufactures, and in this way he achieved a real art in his vessels of clay, a result that so many famous potters who also aimed, as he did, at artistic results according to the fashion of their time and place have so often failed to secure. If the reader will examine and consider the excellence and serviceableness of the cups, jugs, teapots, plates and dishes, which are illustrated in this work alone, though they form but a tithe of the best that he made, he will agree that this is no over-statement of the facts.

A favourite shape of cup and saucer, known as the "Bute" shape, was named after John, Marquis of Bute, for whom a large service of pottery in which it was in-

cluded seems to have been designed during his term of office as Prime Minister of England (1761-63). These are reproduced in the Plate facing p. 48, and I regard them as among the most perfectly shaped cups and saucers of all that have been made, whether by an Oriental or a European potter. Two other articles which formed part of the same service, a milk jug and a covered sugar-box, are illustrated opposite this page. Wedgwood's personal opinion of the design of this particular service would seem to be revealed by the fact that the tea and coffee sets of his famous "Russian Service," made for Catherine II. of Russia between 1771 and 1774, were of this design. The sugar-box from which this illustration is taken was one of the pieces made for this service, but was retained at Etruria, on account of some slight blemish, until it passed into my possession as a gift from the late Mr. Godfrey Wedgwood.

A number of other service-shapes were accorded special names, instead of a mere pattern-book number, and these names were adopted, either from that of the personage for whom the services were designed, or as an indication of the source from which they had been derived. The days of the "crab-stock" handles and other such rusticities had been left behind when the principal Staffordshire potters set out to manufacture articles of a type and fashion such as were better calculated to support an appeal to patrons of a rank and fortune superior to the farmers and lesser gentry.

The "Silver" shape, as its name seems to imply, originated with the plate-workers of the earlier part of the eighteenth century, and it is of interest to note that a cup and saucer of similar shape was a favourite pro-

COVERED SUGAR BOX

Lavender Ware

Height 5 in.

COFFEE POT

Lavender Ware

Height $7\frac{1}{2}$ in.

In the Collection of Mr. William Burton.



duction in the chinaware of Worcester and of Derby about the time when Wedgwood popularized the shape in his earthenware. This softly-fluted shape seems particularly well adapted for manufacture in the "pearl" ware, which more nearly approaches chinaware in tint, and the majority of the "old" Wedgwood examples that have survived are of pearl ware, sometimes in plain glaze save for a line of gilding on the rims and handles, or decorated with the elegant painted and enamelled borders which were then in vogue. The illustrations of table-ware facing p. 140 enable one to recall the salient features of this favourite style of decoration of the period.

The extensive and miscellaneous collections of shells, seaweeds and fossils, which Wedgwood gathered in Etruria Hall as a stimulating factor in the education of his children, furnished him with many ideas for the decorative colour schemes of his earthenwares, and were also adopted as models for the dishes and plates of several dessert services, the most important and complete of the series being the "Shell" dessert service, which has retained its popularity to this day despite all the later productions of Etruria. A considerable number of different shells were utilized in the various services to serve as models for his numerous fruit dishes and table centrepieces, the plates based on the pecten-shell being best represented in our collections nowadays. Of all these the "Nautilus" centrepiece is the most important, and an example of this beautiful piece of conventional modelling, in a fine, white stoneware mounted on a stand modelled in imitation of coral and supported on a foot shaped as a single shell, is shown opposite p. 54.

An earlier and simpler example of table-ware of the same type, though at the same time it is an equally elegant and useful shape for its purpose, is the sauce-boat reproduced from one of the relics of Enoch Wood's famous collection of Staffordshire pottery which are now preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum (*see* facing p. 54). This particular specimen is of additional interest from the fact that it is vouched for by Enoch Wood as a specimen of Wedgwood's early Queen's Ware, and was, probably, made at one of his Burslem factories before the foundation of Etruria.

The large collection of seaweeds which filled one section of Wedgwood's educational cabinets doubtless provided the original source of the decoration found on his "Seaweed" tea and coffee services. The teapot, coffee-pot, and milk jug of these services are notable examples of the thin, sharp "potting" he demanded from his workmen, so that the embossed seaweed ornament, which is in very low relief, has a rarely delicate effect, for it looks almost water-worn.

It seems unfair to the potter to refrain from drawing the reader's attention to the distinction and sense of style which are manifest in such refined and dainty productions as these, especially when they are compared with examples of a later style of modelled ornament in which imitation lacework was applied as a decoration to porcelain figures and other decorative examples. This method must have been widely popular in the late eighteenth century, for it was followed at some of the most famous porcelain factories, both in England and in Germany. While Wedgwood's "Seaweed" pattern is conceived and rendered so as to

SHELL-SHAPED DISH

In "Pearl" Ware, tinted in enamel colours

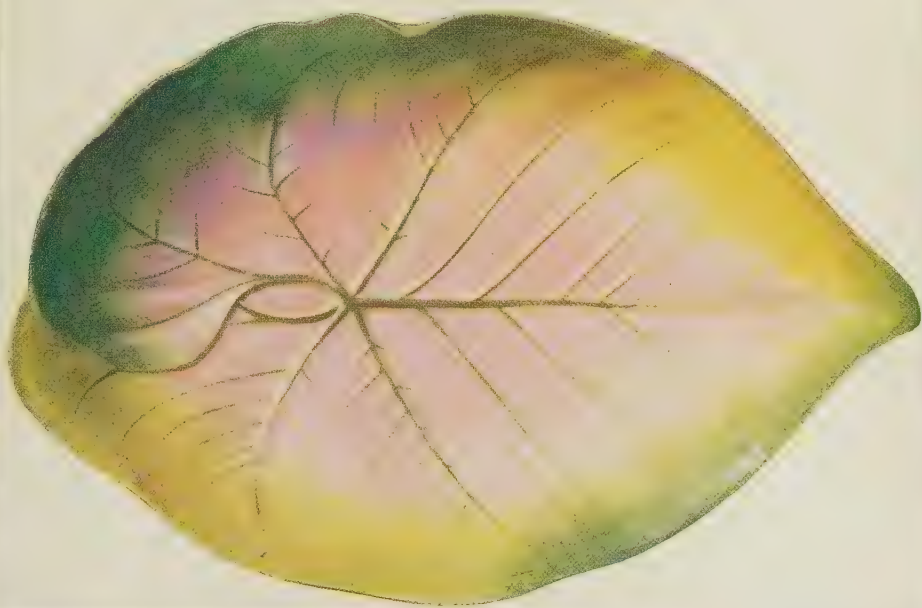
Width $6\frac{3}{4}$ in., length 13 in.

LEAF-SHAPED DISH

Cream-colour Ware, tinted and veined in enamel colours

Length $12\frac{1}{4}$ in., width $8\frac{1}{4}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.



appear in perfect organic relation with the lines and contours of the forms on which it is used, the imitation lacework, wherever it was made or whatsoever skill was spent upon it, wears an air of tawdry vulgarity such as one always associates with the well-known descriptive phrase "cheap finery."

From this condensed account of a few of the most generally appreciated and artistically successful among the wide range of "useful" shapes that Wedgwood made in his light-coloured earthenwares, as distinct from the shapes which were generally reproduced in the "dry" bodies, we must next turn our attention to the decorations in enamel-colours with which they were frequently enriched, especially from about 1770.

The unadorned shapes of beautiful proportion and contour manufactured in cream ware or in ivory-glaze and devoid of painted decoration or gilding, so that they might have been manufactured for the use of a nation of Quakers, were of such all-round excellence that they enabled Wedgwood to secure an extensive trade in this branch of his business, for he sold the ware in great quantities at home and sent huge consignments of it overseas. Nevertheless, the more active demand, especially from abroad, was for pottery services decorated with bright colours and enriched with gold.

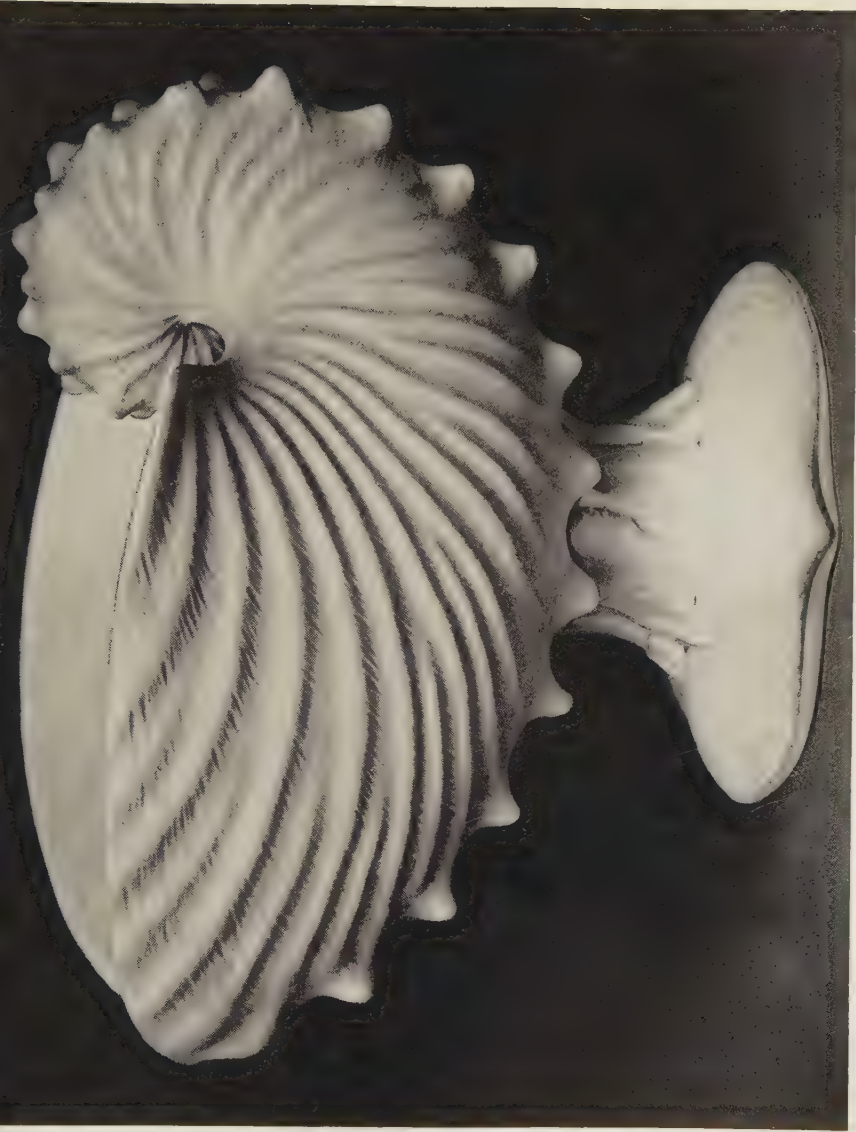
The practical method by which the gold could be fired to the glaze so as to be capable of withstanding the wear inseparable from daily use was no longer a difficulty at Etruria, as it had been when gilding was applied to the "marbled" and other vases some few years before, for by this time the details of the method had become

general property among the potters and porcelain makers of Europe.

The rich masses of underglaze-blue which the Oriental porcelain decorators used so skilfully and so successfully as decoration were hardly likely to stir Wedgwood to emulation, even had that been possible with his materials, but he sought and found a decorative style of his own in which delicate painted patterns of flowers and foliage, berries and leaves and so forth, or heavier formal borders derived from the practice of the Greek vase-painters, could be carried out by his decorators and enriched with a little reticent gilding. (*See Plate facing p. 90.*)

All this procedure was very simple and easy to control, for it involved no undue firing risks, as all the colours and the gold were painted over the glaze, and, moreover, it did not demand any greater skill in the executant than could be easily and quickly acquired by anyone who knew how to handle the simple tools of the pottery decorator's trade.

These table services which were to be enriched with enamel painting were sent to the workshops in London, which had been acquired, primarily, for the decoration of the "Russian Service." For a considerable number of years the enamelled borders referred to above, and a number of others that were introduced as the scheme won its way to popularity, were executed on the glazed ware sent up from Staffordshire by wagon, by a number of enamel-painters of both sexes, who were employed by Wedgwood and Bentley in Greek Street, Soho, where they had spacious show-rooms and other premises. The rear portions of the buildings and the basements were



NAUTILUS DESSERT DISH

White stoneware (biscuit)

Mark: Impressed "WEDGWOOD & BENTLEY"
(*Circa* 1780)

Height 8 $\frac{1}{8}$ in., width 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.

Falcke Collection, British Museum.



SAUCE-BOAT

Cream colour. Queen's Ware
Height 4 in., length $5\frac{7}{8}$ in., width 3 in.
Formerly in Enoch Wood Collection.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

CRUET

Cream colour. Queen's Ware
Stand—Length $11\frac{1}{4}$ in., width $6\frac{3}{4}$ in.
Bottles—Height $5\frac{1}{2}$ in., diameter 2 in.
Castor—Height $3\frac{3}{4}$ in., diameter 2 in.
Bequeathed by Mrs. A. Cameron.

fitted up and used as painting-rooms and kiln-places, for, in order that their arrangements might be as complete and practical as possible—real workshops and not a mere show to impress the public—a muffle-kiln was erected in a suitable room in the basement in order that the painting might be fired and completed on the premises. It is amusing to find that in some of the general accounts of expenses that were incurred in the London show-rooms, which are now preserved at Etruria, there are frequent entries of the charges for billets of wood and sacks of charcoal supplied for firing this kiln.

One can see that this was an excellent business arrangement, as it served to confirm the reputation which the Greek Street rooms had gained as a place of fashionable resort when the “ Russian Service ” was on exhibition there, for now all those people of consequence who regarded themselves as important patrons of Wedgwood and Bentley could still frequent the rooms with their friends to observe such services as they had commissioned being actually carried through the various processes of decoration and firing.

CHAPTER VI

RED, BLACK, AND BUFF POTTERY

BEFORE we deal with the evolution of the "jasper" wares, which Wedgwood regarded as embodying his crowning achievements as a potter and which will assuredly perpetuate his name, we must describe in some detail the different wares he manufactured in the simpler and more ordinary "dry bodies," i.e. pottery with its outer surfaces left unglazed. These were made from the local clays, dug in the district round Burslem, which burnt to various shades of red, buff, drab and chocolate colour, and from which by due admixture of ochreous earths and oxide of manganese, the rich and glossy black basalt was also produced. These common and abundant materials provided the training-ground on which the potters of North Staffordshire made their earliest experiments, and in course of time refined and improved their methods of manufacture and decoration; for they had been at work in this field long before Josiah Wedgwood was born, and the methods that had been gradually perfected by a generation of potters whose names are all but forgotten, called for little alteration when they came to be applied to the "jasper" wares.

If, as we believe, the Elers established themselves as potters in this part of Staffordshire because they had become aware of the suitability of the local clays and the abundance of workmen who had mastered at all

TERRA-COTTA TEAPOT

With white stoneware reliefs

Height $4\frac{1}{2}$ in., length 9 in.

TERRA-COTTA PASTILLE BURNER

Height $6\frac{3}{4}$ in., width of base $6\frac{1}{4}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.



events the rudiments of the potter's craft, their principal legacy to the district will be found to consist in the degree of refinement with which their little pieces of red-ware were wrought and finished and the delicate superiority of their productions to those made by the many native potters who were at work in the locality at that time or before it. Of these, Astbury and Twyford had been employed by the Elers before they settled at Shelton and commenced to manufacture some simple red and black pottery on their own account, but the leaven they had introduced was still fermenting in the minds of other men, and some of the later productions of the Staffordshire potters are deserving of passing notice on this account. Thus, the well-known Samuel Hollins, who likewise worked at Shelton at a much later date, was commonly spoken of as the "red china potter," merely, one supposes, because he worked in the style and manner of the Elers and followed the methods they had introduced so long before. His red and chocolate-coloured teapots, jugs, and coffee-pots have a fine surface with a compact texture which is almost comparable with that of Wedgwood's black basalt, while they are usually decorated with "sprigged" ornament. In the earlier specimens of these productions of Hollins the applied ornament is formed in the same clay as that of the vessel to which it is applied, but in some of his examples which seem to be of later date the figures and ornament appear in black, or other dark-coloured clay, applied as reliefs on a red or chocolate-coloured body. A few choice specimens of his work are also in existence which are made in a rich maroon-coloured body, and, like all

his productions, these are well-potted and finished to perfection.

Hollins has been singled out for mention in this way because his work illustrates the survival and a limited extension of the methods of the preceding generations, but when Josiah Wedgwood, in his turn, manufactured such a great variety of table wares and decorative pottery in the "dry bodies" he naturally availed himself of all the methods that had been introduced by his predecessors, of every rank in the craft, though it is obvious that he usually carried them farther or applied them to new ends. Wedgwood's particular merit will be found to consist in the graceful, yet eminently practical, lines of the shapes he finally settled upon for his ordinary articles of domestic pottery, jugs, teapots and such things, and in the variety of combinations he used in ornamenting them. Here he repaid with interest all that he owed to the labours and ingenuity of his predecessors, by the important additions he contributed to the common stock. It would certainly be difficult to recall any method in use in Staffordshire before his day that he did not make the subject of fresh experiment and turn to practical account, usually with some spice of novelty. The older methods never lost anything of their freshness or power in his hands, while they often gained a degree of accuracy and precision such as has never been surpassed.

The red terra-cotta, or "*Rosso antico*," to follow the fashionable jargon of the day which is often adopted in Wedgwood's correspondence, was extensively employed at his Burslem and Etruria factories in the manufacture of teapots, jugs, coffee-pots, and the general table-wares of that kind, and we find him humorously



PUNCH KETTLE AND PERFORATED STAND FOR CHARCOAL

Red terra-cotta: ribbed and modelled to imitate basket work

Mark: Impressed imitation Chinese seal mark

Height 13½ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.



"CENTAUR AND A BACCHANTE"

Greyish-buff terra-cotta

(Circa 1770-80)

Diameter $15\frac{3}{4}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

complaining when Bentley urged him to produce portrait medallions and other relief work in this material: "My objection to it is the extreme vulgarity of red wares. If it had never been made in T'pots and the commonest wares, my objection wd not have existed. . . . I wish you to fix upon one of the *Bronze like* colours for heads for the cheap cabinets, as we shall never be able to make the *Rosso Antico*, otherwise than to put you in mind of a *red Pot Teapot*." ¹ It would appear that further experience proved this combination to have been less incongruous than he had feared at the time of this letter, for he subsequently made extensive use of his red terra-cotta in the manufacture of a great variety of articles, such as busts and medallions, bough-pots for plants and flowers, ink-stands, pen-trays, lamps, taper-holders and other furniture for the writing-table as well as for tea ware and the like in various combinations of coloured clays. Thus he made the red pottery with black or buff ornament in applied reliefs, cane-coloured pottery with reliefs in red or buff clay, and less frequently cane-coloured pottery with reliefs in black clay. Sir A. H. Church ² drew attention to this fact long ago when he wrote: "Between 1776 and 1786 Wedgwood made many experiments in some of these terra-cotta bodies, notably in the cane-coloured and bamboo wares," though we may add here that this was also the most fruitful period of his fine productions in the "jasper" wares, for these years were signalized by the appearance of the magnificent series of portrait-medallions which are enumerated in his cata-

¹ Wedgwood to Bentley, March 3, 1776. See Miss Meteyard's "Life of Josiah Wedgwood," vol. ii., pp. 406-7.

² "English Earthenware," Victoria and Albert Museum Handbook, p. 89.

logues under the classification "Illustrious Moderns," and at this time, too, Flaxman was at work on some of the choicest models that he ever executed for Etruria.

This decade in Wedgwood's life, from 1776 to 1786, must be regarded as the crowning period of his career, for then his powers shone in their fullest lustre. What more signal expression could be desired of his powers of organization in the affairs of a great manufacturing concern, and his perfect mastery of all the resources of his craft, than that these numerous and important advances should have been marshalled side by side during these ten years, when almost every week and certainly each succeeding month left its mark on the productions of Etruria!

It is advisable that we should first consider the general domestic services or small sets which were so profusely made in the red terra-cotta, the cane, buff, and drab or olive-coloured bodies and in the black basalt. These, as a class, are all comprised under the designation "dry bodies" because the outer surfaces were left unglazed, though the turner's skill had imparted a fine surface-texture so that they have a bright, glossy finish; while a thin wash of ordinary lead-glaze was afterwards applied inside such articles as jugs, cups and teapots to make them impermeable by the fluids they were intended to contain. Generally speaking, the tints arrived at in these various bodies were fresh-looking and the pottery is remarkably uniform in tone and texture. The shapes in which such simple domestic pieces were designed are always sound in construction and practical in use; indeed, in my opinion, many of them might serve as models for all time, as they have never been improved



MILK JUG

Lavender ware
Height $4\frac{1}{2}$ in.

CAMBRIDGE ALE JUG

Red terra-cotta. (This jug
was made in three or four sizes.)
Height 6 in.



MEDALLION : CUPID ON A DOLPHIN HANDING
A LETTER TO POLYPHEMUS
(After the Herculaneum fresco)

Greyish-buff terra-cotta
(Circa 1770-80)

Diameter 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

upon for their particular purpose. Their merits are well exemplified by the well-known "Cambridge Ale-jug" illustrated opposite p. 60 and other pieces.

In addition to their extensive use as the material of such domestic wares as these, the same clays were freely employed in the multiplication of figures, busts, and ornamental pieces, as well as for candlesticks, ink-stands, taper-holders, pounce boxes, wafer-boxes, bulb-pots, bough-pots and similar articles, intended for what may be described as the useful-ornamental trade. The double purpose which such articles as these might serve in the household caused much discussion and some passing disagreement between Wedgwood and Bentley (for the partnership with Bentley was to apply to the "ornamental" productions only) as to where the exact line was to be drawn between the two groups, the useful and the ornamental. It was clearly impossible to lay down any rigid line of division, so they arrived at a compromise, which seems to have been dictated by Wedgwood's good sense, under which the "useful" class was to comprise all those articles which were made use of in the serving of meals or for general domestic purposes, while the "ornamental" class was to comprise all their productions which were clearly intended for display or adornment in the house rather than for use.

Various drab and olive coloured bodies were made in several shades, though the names sufficiently indicate the general type of colour. Apparently they were much less popular than the red, buff, or black wares. The most interesting and satisfactory application of these drab and olive-coloured bodies will be found in those examples in which the rather dull appearance of the

body is enlivened and refined in tone by applied floral ornament in lilac-coloured jasper. The effect of this combination is at once beautiful and unusual, and such choice examples of its use as are to be seen in the collections of Wedgwood's ware in the Victoria and Albert Museum make one wish they had been more widely appreciated. I have no recollection of any cameos or medallions in this combination, but it was occasionally used for the personal ornaments which were afterwards mounted in gold or in bright steel.

The cane-body, an admirably descriptive name for the colour of a favourite Wedgwood ware, though other potters in the district also used it freely, was largely employed for the "useful" articles and more particularly for such productions as the game-pie dishes, jelly moulds, imitation "iced" cakes, and what is generally called "pie-crust" ware. The cane-coloured pie-dishes were manufactured in several sizes, the largest being about 18 inches long and 10 inches high. They are excellent examples of the potter's skill, for they are well and soundly constructed, so that they have proved very durable in use. Sometimes they were made without ornament save for a crimped edge recalling the rim of a pie, but they were, generally, ornamented by an encircling wreath of modelled leaves and berries in high relief (*see* Plate facing this page).

Apart from its more ordinary uses, the manufacture of articles in the "pie-crust" ware, so as to avoid the consumption of flour in times of scarcity brought about by failure of the English wheat harvest, finds explanation in an unexpected quarter. In the "Life of George Brummell" (the famous dandy, "Beau" Brummell),



CUP AND SAUCER

Cane body with reliefs
in white stoneware

Cup—Height 3 in., diameter $4\frac{1}{4}$ in.

Saucer—Diameter $6\frac{3}{8}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

BOWL

Bamboo ware, tinted with
blue and white enamels

Height $3\frac{5}{8}$ in., diameter $7\frac{1}{2}$ in.



GAME PIE-DISH AND COVER

"Cane" body with modelled reliefs
Height $7\frac{3}{4}$ in., length $14\frac{1}{4}$ in., width $10\frac{5}{8}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum

published by Captain Jeffs in 1844, there is the following passage :—

“ The scarcity two years after Brummell’s retirement, viz., in July, 1800, was so great that the consumption of flour for pastry was prohibited in the Royal Household, rice being used instead ; the distillers left off malting, hackney-coach fares were raised twenty-five per cent. and Wedgwood made dishes to represent pie-crust.”

This, of course, refers to a time after the death of Josiah Wedgwood.

There are many other examples in the cane-body which seem to have been intended to serve somewhat similar purposes, for a great number of table ornaments were made in it, in different imitative shapes, and decorated with white “ stoneware ” or “ jasper ” reliefs, so that they looked like “ iced ” cakes when they were arranged about the table (*see* Plate facing p. 120). Of course they were much too hard to be served as Thackeray says he served the sugar elephant from Gunter’s that he had met so often at different supper parties.

The black basalt, or “ black Egyptian ” as Wedgwood seems to have called it when it was used for his vases and other ornamental objects, was a dense, fine-grained stoneware, coloured by the admixture of a considerable proportion of clay ironstone (impure carbonate of iron and clay) and manganese ore. Such mixtures produce a fired-body which is so hard and dense that it can be employed as a “ touch-stone ” for the precious alloys used by jewellers and goldsmiths, while it is capable of acquiring a high polish at the hands of the lapidary, who can polish or engrave it as he would treat a natural agate or bloodstone. That it was a favourite material with Wedgwood is shown, I think, by the extent to

which he used it for such admirable productions as his taper-holders, which were mostly copied from the ancient terra-cotta lamps of the Greek and Roman potters—the large ornamental lamps with nozzles for a number of separate wicks (*see* Plate facing p. 12); candlesticks of various sizes and designs; important and nobly conceived vases and ewers (such as the famous “Wine” and “Water” ewers which were modelled by Flaxman, and which are among the most successful of his works for Wedgwood), as well as for a great number of tea and coffee services, which are of rare excellence in the form and finish of the individual pieces.

The red and black bodies were also freely used in the manufacture of busts, statuettes, and round or oval medallions, often of considerable size. The busts were extensively used for the embellishment of gentlemen’s libraries and writing-rooms, though too often they seem to have been banished to the tops of book-cases where their details would be practically invisible. The red terra-cotta busts and figures do not seem to have been so popular as those made in black, though one or two models were freely made, of which the best known is a small bust of Mercury, with the winged cap, which is a beautiful example of modelling. The medallion portrait of Flaxman, modelled by himself, which is in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum, is a worthy example of his powers.¹ Among the large-sized portrait busts in black basalt we may mention those of Cicero, Homer, Plato and Zeno; Chaucer, Spenser, Milton, Bacon, Lord Chatham, and the brothers De Witt, the Dutch statesmen. Notable among figures of

¹ Reproduced in “Josiah Wedgwood,” by Sir A. H. Church.

WAX MODEL FOR PLAQUE
(Never used)

Length $21\frac{7}{8}$ in., depth 7 in.

Falcke Collection, British Museum.





VASE, WITH PAINTED GREEK ORNAMENT

Black body with ornament
in "encaustic" colours

Height 12 in., diameter 7 in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

a smaller size are the Linnæus, Voltaire and Rousseau, which are admirable examples of his portrait statuary.

Mention should also be made of the bronze "encaustic," as it was called, a process by which gold was attached to the surface of the black basalt or other dry bodies. Examples of this decoration are now rare, as it is to be feared that the gold has mostly worn away from the pieces to which it was applied, as it was only made to adhere by japper's size. Some of the best examples are to be seen in the Liverpool Museum.

In concluding this review of Wedgwood's work in the "dry" bodies it is necessary to direct the reader's attention to one of the early practical results born out of the wide series of experiments which were undertaken for the production of a white porcelain-like material. This was a fine-grained hard, white stoneware, which was first used in making the square plinths on which the vases, ewers, and other ornamental examples fashioned in the "marbled," "pebble" and "agate" wares were supported, and to which they were securely attached by screwed metal rods and washers inside. A great number of examples which illustrate this application of the white stoneware will be found among the museum collections of Wedgwood's vases in London and elsewhere; some of the best that are known to me are now preserved in the Wedgwood Institute at Burslem, in the Liverpool Museum, and in the museum at the Etruria works.

The student should experience little difficulty in distinguishing this white stoneware from the more famous white jasper, as it differs sufficiently in appearance, both in its slightly greyer colour and harder texture,

to permit of easy identification. Not infrequently the white stoneware plinths—even some of those on which important and costly vases have been mounted—betray evidence of the two serious and ineradicable manufacturing defects that it had in use, viz., a marked tendency to warp or twist out of shape and also to crack during the firing.

In addition, there are a few examples—for such works have become rare and difficult to obtain—which illustrate another application of this white stoneware made by Josiah II., consisting of small vases (seldom more than six or seven inches in height to the top of the cover), pot-pourri jars with perforated covers, and other pieces of a similar kind. In these, the glossy white stoneware forms the body of the piece, while the applied ornament takes the form of richly modelled floral bands on the neck or upper part of the body of the vase or jar, surmounting little figures of *amorini*, all in dark blue jasper of fine quality. I possess three such marked examples, which I bought in Newcastle-under-Lyme more than thirty years ago, when I was engaged at Etruria as chemist to the firm of Josiah Wedgwood and Sons (*see* Plate facing p. 124).



FRUIT DISH

Brown enamel ornament
Length $9\frac{1}{4}$ in., width $6\frac{7}{8}$ in.

British Museum.

FISH DISH

Length $11\frac{3}{8}$ in., width $4\frac{1}{2}$ in.,
height $1\frac{7}{8}$ in.



HONEY-POT AND COVER

Cane-coloured ware

Height 4 in., greatest width 5 in.



COVERED CREAM JUG

Bamboo pattern

Cane-coloured ware

Mark : "WEDGWOOD," impressed

Height 5½ in., diameter 3 in.

Schreiber Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.

CHAPTER VII

THE INVENTION OF THE "JASPER" BODY

THROUGHOUT the course of the long series of trials and systematic experiments which were undertaken in the hope of perfecting the whiteness, and at the same time the reliability during the firing process, of the glossy white stoneware, or white "porcelain biscuit" as it is frequently called in Wedgwood's working notes and his correspondence with Bentley, Wedgwood made repeated trials (amounting to some hundreds in all) with every promising or likely white mineral he could obtain either by his own exertions or by those of a number of his scientific friends. It is clear that he suffered many disappointments in these researches and experiments, for, as yet, he hardly knew what materials that he could obtain would give the required results, but after one set of experimental failures he would soon be all agog with fresh hopes of some other mineral as yet untried.¹

Among the white "spars" and "earths" with which he was experimenting at this time (1773), as is shown by the notebook entries, we find frequent mention of two in particular, those which contain barium; the carbonate, which is often called "Witherite"

¹ How widely Wedgwood cast his net in such attempts to discover a new material for his work may be realized from the fact that he is said to have obtained some of his first specimens of barytes from the district known as Anglezark, in Lancashire, the moorland area lying in the triangle between Chorley, Bolton and Blackburn.

by mineralogists—after the naturalist, W. Withering, who first emphasized its distinction from the sulphate—and the more abundant sulphate which is commonly called “heavy-spar,” or colloquially by the Derbyshire lead-miners, who find it in quantity as the gangue of the lead ores in the Peak district, “cawk.”

For some little time, Wedgwood was greatly puzzled by the apparently capricious behaviour of these two mineral substances when he fired them with various proportions of his different white clays, and, in 1774, he set out on an expedition into Derbyshire in his chaise (“going a-fossilising” he called it), and soon returned in triumph with supplies of both the barytes minerals which he had obtained from the moors above Stony Middleton. His trials quickly proved that the “cawk,” or sulphate of barium, was the substance he required, and this formed the principal and really vital ingredient in his new pottery material, the famous “jasper body.” Sir A. H. Church¹ published the following percentage composition as a close approximation to Wedgwood’s general formula for the preparation of the jasper clay: Sulphate of barium (cawk), 59; clay, 29; flint, 10; carbonate of barium (Witherite), 2; and such a formula shows very clearly what an important rôle the barytes plays in the composition; for we may almost regard the jasper body as finely divided barium sulphate with the addition of the smallest possible amount of clay which would enable the potter to fashion it into shape by the usual methods and fire it successfully.

The jasper body stands apart from the usual types

¹ “Josiah Wedgwood,” by Sir A. H. Church, F.R.S. Seeley and Co., Ltd., London, 1903, p. 28.

JASPER VASE

“Venus in a chariot drawn by swans and doves”

Height $15\frac{5}{8}$ in., diameter $6\frac{3}{4}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.



of earthenware, stoneware, or porcelain because of the great proportion of the barytes minerals in its composition, but it has many merits as a material in which the potter can display the utmost refinements of his skill. These were utilized to the full by Wedgwood, for besides producing a fine white porcelain-like material from such mixtures as those just given, he found that it could be readily and uniformly stained by the ordinary mineral oxides which are used in colouring pottery, to various tones of blue, green, lilac and yellow, as well as to an intense black (richer and fuller in tone than the black-basalt). Its invention and gradual perfection must be regarded as Josiah Wedgwood's crowning achievement in a lifetime of experiment; he had arrived at it by unwearied research and as the result of endless trials, while no other potter is known to have produced it unless he had first acquired some knowledge of Wedgwood's formulæ. In spite of his admirable integrity and generosity of mind and disposition, there is no doubt that Wedgwood's secrets were spied upon, and one or two of his neighbours who showed that they were not very scrupulous in other matters are also suspect in this.

The characteristic appearance of Wedgwood's jasper ware is so well known, for it can surely boast a wider circle of admirers among all classes of our population than any other species of European pottery with any claims to distinguished merit, that an extended verbal description seems unnecessary in this place, especially as most of the principal varieties in colour and of the modes in which it was used are illustrated in this book. The ground colour of the jasper wares may be in one of a number of distinct colours, each of which

occurs in several shades. Thus we have the different shades of blue, which range from a dark, almost "indigo" blue shade through several distinct shades of diminishing intensity to a pale bluish-lavender; the greens, in two or three shades of sage-green, as well as a colder blue-green, which are all extensively used, while an olive-green, which also appears in dark and lighter shades, is found more rarely.

A word may usefully be inserted here as to the genesis of some of the rarer or exceptional shades of colour that are so difficult to classify. I think it may safely be assumed that many of these do not represent any specially prepared shade of coloured jasper. The unusual tone of colour is undoubtedly due to accidental variations in the local temperature or atmospheric conditions (actively oxidizing or reducing as the case might be) of certain parts of the oven in which these particular specimens happened to be fired; though they are rightly prized when they present an unusual beauty in surface quality or tone of colour.

Next in importance to the blues and greens, the ground colour most extensively used in the jasper ware was a deep and glossy black, which is fuller and richer looking, as well as more translucent, than the earlier "black basalt" always so extensively used for the reproduction of the modelled figures and busts. In the collections of Wedgwood's finest productions which are displayed in the British Museum and in the Victoria and Albert Museum there are a number of large and important vases mounted on tall elaborately decorated plinths in the same material, where the body is of black jasper with reliefs in white jasper, and these represent



SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON

White biscuit, modelled by Flaxman

6½ in. by 4½ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.



COVERED SUGAR BOX

Jasper, grey ground with white
cameo decorations

Height $3\frac{3}{8}$ in., width $5\frac{1}{4}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

TEAPOT

Jasper, olive ground with
embossed vine border in lilac

Height $5\frac{1}{2}$ in., length $8\frac{1}{4}$ in.

the most ambitious and ornate examples that were made at Etruria during the later years of Josiah Wedgwood's activities. Any student or connoisseur who wishes to understand the pains and skill which were lavished on the most costly specimens of jasper ware may ponder over the details of such works as these, for it is only by such a study that anyone can realize the immense skill and the resources of technical knowledge with which they have been wrought. We may grant much that has been urged by amateurs of classic purity against their art and archæology, but beyond all cavil or dispute there will still remain the stamp of a great Englishman on his work in this style, and we may fitly adopt for Wedgwood and his works, in presence of these triumphs, the epitaph of proud humility inscribed by Wren over the inner north transept door of St. Paul's: "*Si monumentum requiris, circumspice.*"

One may be forgiven for directing the reader's attention to the oft-mentioned example which is certainly one of Wedgwood's finest productions in this style, and known as the "Pegasus" vase, for he presented it to the British Museum in 1786 as a work of which he was proud. In a letter to Sir William Hamilton, dated June 24, 1786, he refers to this vase as follows:—

"I lamented much that I could not obtain liberty of the merchant to send a vase, the finest and most perfect I have ever made, and which I have since presented to the British Museum. I enclose a rough sketch of it; it is 18 inches high, and the price 20 guineas."

Mr. Hobson¹ states that the main subject of the frieze of figures, sometimes entitled "The Crowning of a Kitharist," but called by Wedgwood "The Apotheosis

¹ "Catalogue of English Pottery in the British Museum," 1903, p. 255.

of Homer," is from a Greek vase in the British Museum. It should be added that the reliefs used on this Wedgwood vase were modelled by Flaxman, and they are notable examples of his happy skill in the translation of the painted subjects found on such ancient vases into low-relief ornament.

The most famous of Wedgwood's reproductions from the antique is represented by his copies of the "Portland Vase," as it is always known in England. The original is an example of Græco-Roman work in glass, which was discovered in a sepulchral mound in the outskirts of Rome in the seventeenth century.¹ It is admittedly the finest work of its kind that has come down to us, and the interpretation of its design has engaged the attention of scholars from time to time, with no very satisfactory results. According to Sir Arthur Church,² the subjects illustrate episodes in the courtship of Peleus and Thetis, while the youthful bust on the base of the vase represents Paris wearing a Phrygian cap, and heavily draped. The base is a separate work, and formed no part of the original design. Sir William Hamilton bought the vase, about the year 1782, for £1,000. He sold it to the Duchess of Portland in 1785, and after her death the Duke of Portland bought it for £1,029, and lent it to Wedgwood that he might make his reproductions. The value

¹ This famous example of Græco-Roman work in glass was found in a sepulchral mount, Monte del Grano, a few miles out of Rome, by the road to Frascati, sometime between 1623-44, during the Pontificate of Urban VIII (Maffeo Barberini, who seems to have been the puppet of Richelieu). The vase was contained in a marble sarcophagus, from its date and style, of the early part of the third century of our era. The vase was afterwards put on exhibition in the British Museum. In 1845, it was broken, but has been stuck together again, and is still to be seen in the "Gem Room" of the Museum.

² "Josiah Wedgwood," A. H. Church, F.R.S. Seeley & Co., Ltd., London, 1903, pp. 30-33.



COPY OF PORTLAND VASE

Etruria 1790-93

Height 10 in., diameter $7\frac{3}{8}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum. Obtained from Charles Darwin, whose father bought it from Wedgwood in 1793.



APOTHEOSIS OF VIRGIL

Jasper plaque. Dark blue ground
Length $14\frac{3}{4}$ in., height $7\frac{3}{4}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

put upon these reproductions by collectors has shown great fluctuations from time to time, though at present any one of the original copies would command a high price. Fortunately, perfect examples of the Wedgwood reproductions of the first series are accessible to all students. The British Museum has one of the first subscription copies; while there are two at the Victoria and Albert Museum—one in the Jones Bequest, and the historic example from the Jermyn Street Collection which was formerly in the Jermyn Street Museum. This last specimen has the additional interest that it was originally bought in 1793 by R. W. Darwin, of Shrewsbury, the son of Wedgwood's friend and physician, Erasmus Darwin, and was sold to the Jermyn Street Museum by the famous Charles Darwin. This is the specimen from which the illustration facing p. 72 has been made for this work.

Another use which was made of these adapted or translated figures and groups will be found in their application to flat slabs, plaques or panels, either rectangular, circular or oval in shape; the largest being of such considerable dimensions that they must have taxed all the manufacturing skill of Etruria. These slabs were principally used at the time as inlays for furniture, and they were also secured into recessed mantelpieces of marble and other fine stones designed by such eminent contemporary architects as the brothers Adam and Sir John Soane. Few of them seem to have survived in their original settings, for the mantelpieces have been ruthlessly swept away and destroyed by later architects, but examples of such plaques, now simply framed in wood, are to be seen in the Falcke Collection in the

British Museum, while there are a considerable number also in the Victoria and Albert Museum, some of which came from the Jermyn Street Collection. Illustrations of typical examples will be found in this work.

Busts and figures, usually of small dimensions, were also made in white jasper. These are not common, though such as are known are generally of beautiful quality. It cannot have been a simple matter to produce "white jasper" figures in all their waxen purity, for it must always have been difficult to hit the happy mean in the firing between the stage at which the material would be dry and chalky-looking from insufficient vitrification (when it would also become dirty from smoke or handling after it was made), or they would be overfired, when they became unpleasantly glossy and lost their sharpness of detail or twisted out of shape. A bust of "Voltaire" (p. 166), and a larger symbolic bust which is entitled "Terror" (p. 110), are herein reproduced, as they are particularly noteworthy, both for the quality of the material and for the skill with which they were modelled, so that I am inclined to consider them the best examples of the white jasper figures that I know. Undoubtedly figures of this ware are of great beauty when they had been successfully fired, and it seems a pity they should be so rare now.

Another ground colour which was freely used in the jasper wares, though, unfortunately, it was somewhat fugitive and uncertain at the high temperature required to fire the ware, is generally known as "Lilac," the name invariably used by Wedgwood, though Miss Meteyard and others have, with unwarranted enthusiasm, spoken of it as "peach-blossom."¹ This colour was obtained

¹ "Handbook of Wedgwood Ware," l.c., p. 34.

JASPER VASE AND PEDESTAL

Vase—Height $13\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Pedestal—Base $8\frac{3}{4}$ in. wide

British Museum.



by the use of refined and purified oxide of manganese, and, as is natural with such manganese colours, it varies according to the degree of fire to which it has been subjected, from a brownish pink in which the pink tone predominates, to a pale *café-au-lait* flushed with pink, when it has some resemblance to the colour of opening peach-blossom. The uncertainty of this colour in the fire probably explains why it was less freely used as a ground colour than the blues and greens, for at its best this lilac ground is refined and beautiful in tone, and it is extremely valuable, decoratively, on account of its warmth amidst so many cool shades of colour. The illustration of the vase facing p. 74 affords a choice example of the best tone which the colour assumes when used in fairly large masses.

Another purpose for which this colour was very freely used was in the bands or central panels of the circular and oval cameos,¹ from about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches to $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, where it was generally edged with an encircling band of green jasper; and in some of these small articles it appears with excellent effect. A number of these choice little pieces are exhibited in the table-cases of Wedgwood's wares in the British Museum. In the Schreiber Gift in the Victoria and Albert Museum there are a great number of small Wedgwood cameos in various settings, intended for use as personal ornaments, and many dainty examples of the lilac-coloured ground will be found among them (*see* Plate facing p. 76).

This mention of articles of personal adornment also

¹ In Wedgwood's wares of this class those examples which are not more than two and a half inches in diameter are generally called "cameos," while those which are over this size are classed as "medallions."—"Handbook of Wedgwood Ware," l.c., p. 76.

recalls the extensive use made by Wedgwood of the metal-mounter's assistance in extending the sale of his cameos, seals, trinkets, and *bijouterie*, made in his numerous bodies and particularly in red body and in jasper ware.

He undoubtedly commenced this association during his partnership with Whieldon, who had been active in this branch of the trade before him, but he built up a much larger business of this kind, when he was prepared to supply such a variety of suitable objects for mounting in metal as seals, cameos and intaglios for use in rings, chains for watches and muffs, watch-cases, scarf-pins, hairpins, hat-pins, brooches, buckles, bracelets, smelling-bottles, scent-bottles, and a host of similar things. A selected group of such articles which are mounted as they were used will be found on the Plate facing p. 122.

The quaint sets of chessmen, some of which were modelled by Flaxman between 1783 and 1785, are charming examples of the smaller figures in "jasper" ware. They were made in a variety of colours and combinations—the major pieces are usually in white jasper on bases of blue or green jasper; while the pawns, which embody many interesting figures of mediæval foot-soldiery, are usually of blue or green jasper. I have never heard that a chess-board or chess-table was designed by Flaxman, but a chess-board in the form of a circular table top in black and white jasper, with designs from a mediæval tournament by Walter Crane, R.I., was made, I believe, about 1870, probably for display at one of the International Exhibitions.

$2\frac{1}{8}$ in. \times $1\frac{3}{4}$ in.

2 in. \times $1\frac{1}{4}$ in.

$2\frac{1}{8}$ in. \times $2\frac{1}{2}$ in.

$1\frac{7}{8}$ in. \times $1\frac{1}{2}$ in.

$1\frac{7}{8}$ in. \times $1\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Length $11\frac{1}{2}$ in.

PERSONAL ORNAMENTS IN JASPER WARE

Schreiber Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.





PERSONAL ORNAMENTS

Jasper Ware with
white cameo decorations

Schreiber Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.



Pawn Halberdier, 2·5 in.



Pawn Bowman, 2·5 in.



Bishop, 2·8 in.



King, 4·2 in.



Queen, 4·2 in.

CHESSMEN IN JASPER WARE

British Museum.

CHAPTER VIII

WEDGWOOD'S PRINTED EARTHENWARES

THE invention of the method by which patterns printed from engraved copper-plates on sheets of thin paper could be transferred to the glazed surface of articles of pottery or porcelain as a means of producing shaded outline designs in such a way that the articles appear to be elaborately decorated, though they could still be sold at a moderate price, seems typical of the practical side of the English temperament. This process was invented and had already been used in London for a number of years before it was followed in Staffordshire, though it was ultimately adopted there with such success that the "Potteries" district might have been its native home. The first practical results in this style of decoration originated from the efforts and experiments of a number of men—mostly engravers, or printers of book illustrations and the popular books of designs intended for the use of workers in various trades—who discovered how such patterns could be transferred from an engraved copper-plate, in vitrifiable colours, and fired to the surface of articles in enamelled-metal, porcelain and pottery. Many conflicting claims have been advanced as to how and where the process originated, but it would seem to have been experimented with and improved in detail by several men before it reached any definite success.

Battersea, with its enamels, and the porcelain factories of Bow, Chelsea, and Worcester, were all early in the field with patterns printed on their wares. Doubtless it was the successful issue of these efforts that first directed the attention of the Staffordshire potters to the process. Some of the more enterprising of these manufacturers adopted it on a great scale, though for many years they were content to send their glazed pottery to Liverpool by wagon, where the printed patterns were applied and fired to the surface of the glaze, and the ware was then returned to its makers, either to be sold as it was or to receive further enrichment in painted enamel-colours and gold.

The names and doings of John Sadler and Guy Green are famous in the history of the application of printed patterns to pottery and tiles, for they were responsible for the introduction and widespread use of the process in Liverpool, shortly after 1750. At that time, Liverpool was the seat of an extensive and thriving trade in pottery-making, as in addition to producing pottery and porcelain of several kinds, great quantities of wall-tiles were also made, in obvious imitation of the more famous tiles of Delft, in Holland. Examples of all these productions of the Liverpool potters, bearing excellently printed designs mostly copied from book illustrations, the engraved plates used for the purpose and the actual printing representing the work of Sadler and Green, form a large proportion of the Liverpool pottery ware that is to be seen in our museum collections. Sadler and Green must have perfected their processes by the year 1755,¹ as shortly

¹ See Mayer's "Art of Pottery in Liverpool," and Ll. Jewitt's "Ceramic Art in Great Britain," vol. ii., pp. 29-30, for copies of affidavits sworn at Liverpool by these printers, in 1756.



SUPPER TRAY AND CENTRE DISH

Queen's Ware. Painted borders
of dark brown on yellow

Centre Dish with Cover—Height $3\frac{3}{4}$ in., diameter $7\frac{7}{8}$ in.

Side Dishes, each—Length $13\frac{3}{8}$ in., width $6\frac{1}{8}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.



OVAL DISH

Moulded wavy edge Rim bears initials "I.M.C." and floral sprigs
Centre—Landscape with ruins, a tall pyramid, fountain, etc.
Length 18½ in., width 15 in.

Schreiber Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.

after that date they began to advertise the fact that they were prepared to print and fire patterns, in various colours, on tiles and pottery, with a choice of subjects from the series of engraved plates they owned, for any manufacturer who would send his goods to their works in Harrington Street, Liverpool, for that purpose.

They appear to have circulated handbills, of their own printing, to this effect among the Staffordshire and Yorkshire potters, and it is believed that Wedgwood was one of their first customers among the manufacturers in his district. He had established himself in business at Burslem about the year 1759, as we have seen, and he very soon commenced to send large and regular consignments of his earthenwares to Liverpool, to be printed by Sadler and Green with their patterns on his account. In the beginning of this branch of his trade he doubtless accepted such stock patterns as the printers already possessed, and which they were prepared to apply to the pottery which any manufacturer might forward to Liverpool for that purpose. Wedgwood, however, was not a man who would easily rest content with the general patterns of the trade which were equally at the service of any other potter, after he had proved the value of the process in his own business. He soon commenced, therefore, to furnish the printers with his own patterns, and owned, even if he did not supply, the engraved copper-plates used in the process.

For some thirty years the only colours that were in use for printed patterns were the enamel-colours, black, red or purple, applied to the fired glaze (hence the term "overglaze" colours); for printing in blue, underglaze, which ultimately became the most popular method of

all, was only introduced into Staffordshire about 1780, when Josiah Spode, who had worked under Wedgwood at the Whieldon factory, introduced blue-printing with such great success at his own factory at Stoke-on-Trent, in rivalry with the china factories of Worcester, Caughley and Derby.

In initiating and for so many years pursuing this course of sending his glazed earthenwares to Liverpool to receive their printed enrichment, Wedgwood remained true to the general business-policy which he had adopted so soon as he had to manage a factory on his own account, and he never departed from this sensible course so long as he lived. He was at all times prepared to avail himself of all the suitable assistance he could secure from outside his own works,¹ so long as such a course would answer his immediate purposes with any degree of mutual advantage and satisfaction. By availing himself of such assistance or co-operation, some of the subsidiary processes of decoration and so forth could be left to others, while he remained as free, as such a busy man could ever be from those details, to pursue his more immediate and important labours as a master-potter.

He had adopted the plan of sending his earthenwares to Liverpool to receive their printed decoration while he was still conducting his factories at Burslem and long before the works at Etruria was in existence, while it can be shown that Green (the surviving partner in the firm of Sadler and Green) continued to print some of Wedgwood's earlier patterns, which had become a

¹ Some of his "lustre" decorations in gold and platinum were carried out for him by Steele, of Hanley, even to the end of his life; as is shown by letters and invoices which are preserved in the museum at the Etruria works.



COFFEE POT AND TEAPOT

Cream-colour Ware with printed designs

Coffee Pot—Height 5 in., diameter $3\frac{3}{8}$ in.

Teapot—Height $5\frac{3}{8}$ in., diameter $4\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Schreiber Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.



PLATE

Printed in black
at Liverpool
Diameter $7\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Schreiber Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.



CUP AND SAUCER

Printed in purple
at Liverpool
Cup—Height $1\frac{3}{4}$ in., diameter 3 in.
Saucer—Diameter 5 in.

regular feature of his trade, as late as 1784, or more than thirty years after they had first embarked on their business as potter's engravers and printers. In proof of this it is possible to point to an existing memorandum of the year 1783, which is preserved among the historical documents at Etruria and which has reference to a service of dinner and tea ware made by Wedgwood for David Garrick, the famous actor. This service was sent to Liverpool in order that it might be printed at Green's works with a selected border pattern and a cipher composed of the initials D. G., and the invoice shows that the cost of this work, as charged to Wedgwood, amounted to the sum of £8 6s. 1½d.

Furthermore, a large number of Wedgwood's earthenware dinner plates, mugs, jugs, teapots, and similar articles are still in existence which display the identical printed designs that are found on some of the contemporary Liverpool tiles. In the collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum, as well as in those of the Liverpool Museum, there are fine series of both the Liverpool tiles and of Wedgwood's dinner plates and other service-pieces which were printed in Liverpool. Among these collections anyone may soon discover instances where the same pattern, obviously designed in the first place for use on a square tile, is made to do duty on a plate also. In such a case, when the pattern of a square tile design was applied without alteration in the centre of a plate or a dish, it was so obviously incomplete as a piece of appropriate decoration that Wedgwood felt compelled to draw it into some sort of relation to the shape of his plate or dish. He achieved this end by framing the print with an elaborate enamelled decoration, painted

by hand, of looped ribands, pendent strings of husks, or other popular devices of the style. The framed print occupied the centre of the plate or dish, while on the broad rim little scattered sprays of flowers and foliage were painted by the enamellers; though they bear no sort of relation in character or style to the central printed design. Table services of this description must have been rather troublesome and costly to produce, especially in the days when they had to be conveyed to Liverpool and back to receive the fired printed-decoration.

One imagines that when Wedgwood came to regard such examples dispassionately at a later time, he must have felt that they furnished a curious record of the popular English taste (his own included) at a period when the older traditions of pottery decoration had been forgotten or deliberately abandoned, and no sure principles of decorative art as applied to pottery, porcelain and the other common everyday things had been re-established among us.

From about the year 1784 (the date is not certain to a few months, though that is not really material) all the new designs of printed patterns for Wedgwood's general trade, as well as the printed outlines of the numerous patterns that were intended to be filled in by the enamellers, were printed on the works at Etruria, so that the sending of pottery forward and backward between Staffordshire and Liverpool was brought to an end. How rapidly this type of decoration with the enamelled borders and so forth had come into general use is revealed in a somewhat curious way. When Thomas Wedgwood, Josiah's cousin and his partner in the "useful" branch of the pottery business, died in 1787, it became necessary to draw up



DISH WITH PERFORATED BORDER

Cream colour with black print

Mark : Impressed "WEDGWOOD"

Width $11\frac{1}{4}$ in., height 10 in

Schreiber Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.



PLATES

Cream Ware. Printed in black
Diameter 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.

Schreiber Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.

a complete inventory of the stock of pottery, plant and tools of that section of the joint affairs, and so it comes about that we possess a complete memorandum of the engraved plates which the firm owned at that date, and we find that they made up an extensive and miscellaneous range of subjects of very varied types. It is not easy in some cases to identify some of the patterns with certainty when we have no other guidance than such as is furnished by the titles used in this list. Here we find a great abundance of patterns which are merely described as "Antique," "Greek" and "Etruscan" borders. In another class we have some curious works-names such as "Calico pattern and springs" [? sprigs], "Printed bird pattern," "Queen's pattern," "Red birds" (both evidently versions of the popular "Exotic birds" which were in use at many of the principal European factories about this time), and "Enamelled shagreen" (a veined or marbled decoration obviously). Other patterns that are mentioned in this list seem less difficult to identify with certainty, as, for instance, "Honeysuckle in several colours," "Red and black strawberry-leaf with drop," "Light green bell drops," and "Blue convolvulus with green leaves," for such titles explain themselves in any collection of the enamelled patterns, and several of them will be found in use on the examples of the earthenwares of this class which are given in this book.¹ (*See Plates facing pp. 16 and 78.*)

These border patterns were used and adapted in such a variety of ways that their history would form an inter-

¹ A large assortment of these patterns, reproduced in colours and gold, will be found in Miss Meteyard's "Life of Josiah Wedgwood" (l.c.).

esting study in the evolution of pattern on our late eighteenth - century pottery, for other manufacturers used them extensively in addition to Wedgwood. When the simpler types had proved their merits on the plain earthenwares, they were relieved over bands of bright solid colour such as light Indian red, bright pale yellow, crimson and purple of several shades, while the general effect was heightened by the introduction of a little gold burnt into the glaze. This elegant style of decoration, in which the painted colour became more and more important and the printed outlines served mainly for emphasis or definition of pattern, was at once received into popular favour, and though the style passed almost into oblivion in the last century it has been successfully revived in recent years, and now all who appreciate such fine and unpretentious things may have services decorated in this way in daily use in their own homes. Other potters in Staffordshire and some of the leading porcelain makers also adopted these methods, and beautiful examples made by Elijah Mayer, by Spode and others, are well known.



PLATES

"Mercury and the Woodman"

Cream colour framing Liverpool prints in on-glaze red with green enamelled "husks" and edging

Diameter 10 in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

"The Prodigal Son"

CHAPTER IX

THE WEDGWOOD "RUSSIAN SERVICE"

THAT extraordinary and masterful woman, the autocratic ruler of a vast semi-barbaric empire, Catherine II. of Russia, appears to have ordered her life on the principle enunciated by the French marquise who said of herself: "The great God would never lightly damn a person of her quality." The ambitious statecraft and tortuous, insincere and opportunist diplomacy which Catherine displayed throughout her reign wrought untold suffering and misery among her own subjects and those of the neighbouring territories, from the Baltic to the Ægean. It is not a matter for surprise, therefore, that in her business dealings with the most renowned porcelain makers and potters of Europe, she appears to have treated them precisely as she would have behaved had they been subjects of her own dominion.

Thus, she commissioned from the Royal porcelain works of Sèvres and of Copenhagen the most extensive, elaborate and costly table-services that they could devise, and if we may base an opinion on the profound differences in the styles of decoration displayed on these two services, it would seem as if each establishment must have been left free to choose its own ideas and decorative methods. The celebrated French service was completed and delivered,¹ though, so far as can be ascertained after this

¹ Odd plates of this service have since found their way abroad, and there are three plates in the collections in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

lapse of time, Catherine never paid for it, as the outbreak of the French Revolution furnished her with a pretext for breaking off the negotiations that seem to have been spun out for several years by disputes as to the exact method in which her payments should be made. The Danish service, which is usually known as the "Flora Danica" service, because it was painted in enamel-colours with meticulous drawings of the flowers and plants of the country which recall the illustrations in famous botanical works of the period, was never delivered to Russia, for so many years were taken in its execution that Catherine II. had died before it could be completed, and the bargain was repudiated by her successor, the Emperor Paul (1796-1801). A great number of the pieces of this service are still preserved in the Danish royal palaces and museums. The English student will find a number of excellent reproductions of individual specimens in Mr. Arthur Hayden's "Royal Copenhagen Porcelain."

Josiah Wedgwood, or, rather, the firm of Wedgwood and Bentley, as it then was, was commissioned to manufacture for the use of the Empress, at her country seat, "La Grenouillère,"¹ which now forms part of the buildings of the palace of Peterhof, near Petrograd, an extensive table-service in their celebrated cream-coloured earthenware. This admirable domestic pottery had already won the highest repute throughout the length and breadth of Russia, where the firm had their own appointed agents, who travelled to the principal towns and fairs of Russia and Eastern Europe—importing

¹ Hence the badge of a "frog"—which was painted in enamel-colours on the border of each piece.

CUP, COVER AND STAND

Jasper Ware

Cup—Height $3\frac{7}{8}$ in., width $3\frac{3}{4}$ in.

Saucer—Diameter $4\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

SLOP BASIN

Jasper Ware

Diameter $7\frac{3}{8}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.



their manufactures by way of Reval and the other Baltic ports. The testimony of a celebrated foreign traveller and observer is of the greatest interest in this connexion, and Mr. Faujas de Saint-Fond, Professor of Geology in the Museum of Natural History, Paris, writing in his "Travels in England," which was published in 1797,¹ extols the merits of Wedgwood's cream-coloured earthenware in terms which are deserving of remembrance. He writes :—

"Its excellent workmanship, its solidity [durability?], the advantage which it possesses of withstanding the action of fire, its fine glaze impenetrable by acids,² the beauty, convenience, and variety of its forms, together with its moderate price, have created a commerce so active and so universal that in travelling from Paris to St. Petersburg, from Amsterdam to the furthest point of Sweden, from Dunkirk to the southern extremity of France, one is served at every inn from English earthenware. The same fine article adorns the tables of Spain, Portugal, and Italy; and it provides the cargoes of ships to the East Indies, the West Indies and America."

When Wedgwood and Bentley secured the commission for their "Russian Service" they were well aware that its execution would prove a strain on their organization at Etruria if they were to maintain their ordinary business in the British Isles and abroad as well, but they can never have imagined what worries, labours, and anxieties were to accumulate upon them before it was completed. A considerable portion of the first three years of the time was occupied in the task of gathering together, at the workshops in Chelsea and at Etruria, a huge

¹ This work was entitled "*Voyage en Angleterre, en Ecosse et aux Iles Hébrides*," and appeared in an English translation, in two volumes, published in London in 1799.

² In marked contrast to the ordinary domestic pottery and faience of Europe, the glazes of which were attacked even by the feeble acids, vinegar, etc., used in cooking.

collection of prints and drawings, many of which could not be used for the service after all, though they seem to have been brought into use for the ordinary table services which the firm manufactured in such vast quantities for their home and foreign trade. This collection comprised etchings and engravings of every kind, such as appeared in books of family or county history, and a large assortment of the popular prints of the day. Various London print-sellers were just then publishing illustrations of the town and country mansions, with their parks and gardens, belonging to the nobility and landed gentry of the British Isles, for this was the era when Capability Brown, who laid out the grounds and gardens at Etruria Hall for Wedgwood, was busy in the land making new gardens or transforming old ones in every part of the country.

Besides drawing freely on all these fountains of supply Wedgwood and Bentley purchased water-colour drawings and sketches from some well-known British painters, such as George Barret, R.A., who prepared a number of the London drawings. This artist is believed to have made the drawing of old "Northumberland House," which stood near Charing Cross at the corner of the present Northumberland Avenue, as well as for some of the river landscapes about Chiswick Reach. Views of Hampstead were taken from designs which had been engraved by J. B. C. Chatelaine for Boydell, the print-seller, and it has been suggested that some of the drawings which he made for this purpose, and from which he had prepared plates for Boydell, may have been acquired subsequently for the collections at Etruria.

In addition to availing themselves of all such sources



JARDINIÈRE

Light blue jasper

Mark : Impressed "WEDGWOOD"

Height $6\frac{3}{4}$ in., diameter $7\frac{3}{4}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

PEDESTAL

White and green chequer
with lilac quatrefoils on
white squares

Height $4\frac{1}{2}$ in., diameter 5 in.

of supply or those brought before their notice by eager agents among the booksellers and print-sellers, Wedgwood and Bentley employed a number of architectural and topographical draughtsmen, particularly a Mr. Stringer, of Knutsford, Cheshire, who appears to have been most actively engaged on the task of securing further illustrations which could not be obtained otherwise. Stringer travelled through many parts of Great Britain, almost literally from John o' Groat's to Land's End, to procure sketches of the most famous buildings, gardens and scenes, and was employed in this way from start to finish of the laborious undertaking.

Among the papers preserved in the museum at the Etruria works there is a draft of a letter in Josiah Wedgwood's handwriting, and dated December, 1773, addressed to a Mrs. Talbot, which shows one of the methods he used in securing the "views" of such places as he required. The draft runs :—

We are now executing a commⁿ for the Empress of Russia. It is for a Table service consisting of more than 2,000 pieces upon each of which is to be a real view from English Gardens & pleasure grounds painted in Enamel. We are to n^o each piece & send a Catalogue to the Empress saying from whose seat each view is taken. May I beg the favor, Mad^m, of enriching our collection with a few of these views from your beautifull Park & Gardens. A Painter (Mr. Stringer of Knutsford) will wait upon you in a few days to ask this favour & if you please to indulge him with the permission it will be gratefully acknowledged by
Mad^m &c.

By means of such letters, by personal interviews, and by the interests of many influential friends, Wedgwood was able finally to secure many of these "views," for the project was so warmly received among the great landowners of the Midlands that it developed into a sort of competition as to the mansions that were to be

distinguished by making their appearance on the more important articles of the service. Two letters which Wedgwood wrote to Bentley at this time refer to the difficulties in which they had become involved in attempting to reconcile so many conflicting claims:—

Nov. 23, 1773.

I think, by what you mention in your last, & by what I have seen and learn'd lately, we shall do much better in every respect than we have hitherto done, & by the time this service is completed we shall be about prepared to execute such an order from our own Good K. & Q., but this is under the Rose. The line we have thus got into is very promising, & I hope will succeed. . . . I am most afraid of our not having large Dishes & other large pieces enough left to oblige our Friends who sho^d be put into capital situations.

A week later he returns to the subject again :—

December 1st, 1773.

It is a Pity but we had more large Dishes in the service. As it is, it will soon be in reality, too great a partiality for a Country Esqr though he does happen to be ones neighbour, & a good man, to occupy so Capital a situation as a large Dish when there is but 2 or 4 in the whole Service. If we can afford one of them to L^d Gower will be as much as the Bargain, for we have in my opinion been guilty of a Capital omission in not writing to His Majesty to know his Maj—s pleasure if he would permit us to take any views from the R—l Palaces or Gardens—but it is better late than never & I am firmly of opinion it ought to be done & beg leave to submit it to your consideration.

It certainly appears to be clear from these two letters that the partners had neglected to approach the King and Queen, or to obtain views of the Royal palaces, up to this time. That this omission was repaired is proved by numerous subjects which appear in the final list of illustrations, and which are quoted here in orderly sequence for facility of reference :—

No. 5, View, with a portion of the Palace of H.R.H. the Dowager Princess of Wales, in the County of Middlesex ; No. 7, View of the Moat

FRUIT DISH

Painted in colours and gold
"Arms of Dorrien" in centre

Length $9\frac{3}{4}$ in.

PERFORATED CHESTNUT BASKET

Height $7\frac{3}{4}$ in., diameter 7 in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.





COFFEE JUG

Jasper. Lilac ground,
Figure of "Time" in medallion
Height $8\frac{1}{4}$ in., width $8\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

The Wedgwood "Russian Service" 91

Island in the Royal Park at Windsor ; No. 9, View in the Royal Gardens at Kew ; No. 14, View of Denbigh Castle, in the County of the same name, the property of the Crown ; No. 28, View of Hurst Castle, Hampshire, the property of the Crown ; No. 30, View of Brivals Castle, Gloucestershire, the property of the Crown ; No. 33, View of Rhudland Castle, Flintshire, the property of the Crown ; No. 34, View of Flint Castle, Flintshire, the property of the Crown ; No. 41, View of Chester Castle, Cheshire, the property of the Crown ; No. 45, View of Lanstephan Castle, Carmarthenshire, the property of the Crown ; No. 92, View of a part of the lake and island in the Royal Gardens at Kew ; No. 95, View of a part of the Stables of the Lodge, Windsor ; No. 96, View of the Lodge in the Great Park at Windsor ; No. 115, View of a part of Moat Island in the Great Park at Windsor ; No. 134, View of Virginia Water, Windsor ; No. 135, View of the Cascade, Windsor ; No. 136, View of the Grotto, Windsor ; No. 144, View of the Mosque in the Royal Gardens at Kew ; No. 196, View of Virginia Water, Windsor ; No. 204, View near the Lodge in the Great Park at Windsor.

The actual enamelling of the service, together with the borders, and the frogs, which were painted separately as a badge on each piece, was executed by a number of enamellers working under the general direction of Bentley in the London workshops. After the completion of the service some of the best of these enamellers were employed, either in London or at the Etruria works, in painting the earthenware services with the various types of enamelled borders to which we have already referred (*see pp. 83-84*).

The progress of Wedgwood's ideas and methods in the decoration of his general earthenware services is shown in the most interesting and instructive manner when we compare the designs which were used on his table-ware printed in Liverpool by Sadler and Green, with the simple floral borders based on our common English flowers that were so extensively used, and as a third style the heavier and more ornate border patterns copied or adapted from Greek and Roman pottery which

were successively introduced. Each of these styles was widely popular in its time, and they were all applied to the table-services in such a way as to bring fresh reputation to Wedgwood's domestic pottery.

When the Russian Service was completed, in 1774, it was exhibited for some time in the London show-rooms of the firm in Greek Street, Soho, and the well-known gossip, Mrs. Delany,¹ left a brief account of it which is worth quoting for its liveliness of description :—

“ I am just returned from viewing the Wedgwood ware that is to be sent to the Empress of Russia. It consists, I believe, of as many pieces as there are days in the year, if not hours. They are displayed at a house in Greek Street, Soho, called Portland House. There are three rooms below, and two above, filled with it, laid out on tables ; everything that can be wanted to serve a dinner. The ground, the common ware, pale brimstone, the drawings in purple, the borders a wreath of leaves, the middle of each piece a particular view of all the remarkable places in the King's dominions, neatly executed. I suppose it will come to a princely price ; it is well for the manufacturer, which I am glad of, as his ingenuity and industry deserve encouragement.”

There can be no doubt that the exhibition of the service in London was a fine advertisement for the manufacturers of Etruria, for many other splendid things were on view in the rooms as well as the service, so that if Wedgwood's pottery had been popular in England before, it gained immensely in reputation in the fashionable world by this display of the extensive and extraordinary service made to the commands of an Empress. The service was dispatched to Russia in 1774, at the close of this exhibition in London, and the Empress Catherine is said to have shown it with pride to Lord

¹ Mary Granville Delany (1700-88), wife of Patrick Delany, a friend of Swift's. She was a great favourite with George III. and Queen Charlotte, who gave her a small house at Windsor and a pension after the death of her bosom friend the Dowager Duchess of Portland.



GOBLET-SHAPED VASES

White on green jasper. (Circa 1790)
 Mark: Impressed "WEDGWOOD"
 Height 7 in., diameter 5 in.

Falcke Collection, British Museum.

Malmesbury, the British Minister, when he visited the Palace in 1795. It may be added that some few years ago (1909) the late Tsar of Russia, Nicholas II., lent a large portion of the service to the firm of Josiah Wedgwood and Sons, Ltd., and its exhibition in Conduit Street, London, attracted almost as much interest and attention as its first public display in Greek Street, in 1774.

CHAPTER X

THE STAFFORDSHIRE LUSTRE POTTERY

THE Wedgwoods of Etruria, as well as a number of other potters in Staffordshire, made extensive decorative use of platinum—a metal which attracted considerable attention in scientific circles in England and other countries during the latter half of the eighteenth century, in consequence of the exploitation of the mineral deposits containing platinum and some of the rarer allied metals usually found in association with it, which occur in various regions of South America. It was first described as a compact metal by William Watson,¹ who had been able to conduct experiments on some samples obtained by an explorer, Charles Wood, who had acquired a number of specimens at Carthagena, in Colombia, South America, probably as a scientific curiosity. It was more exactly and fully described by Scheffer, in the Memoirs of the Stockholm Academy for 1752, in a communication entitled “On White-gold, or the seventh Metal, termed in Spanish ‘platina del Pinto,’” that is, small silver of Pinto (*platina*, diminutive of *plata*, the Spanish for silver, while the term *del Pinto* had been added to signify its place of origin, because it had been first discovered in the gold-bearing sands of that river).

The South American deposits of platinum appear

¹ “Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London,” 1750.

COVERED CREAM BOWL AND LADLE

Gold lustre on "pearl" body

Height 6 in., width $7\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Ladle—Length 6 in.

GOLD LUSTRE TWIG BASKET

Height $3\frac{1}{4}$ in., diameter $7\frac{3}{4}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.



to have been the only sources of supply until the important deposits were discovered in Russia and Siberia about 1823. An important scientific expedition sent into the Ural Mountain regions by the St. Petersburg Academy, and conducted by the celebrated Alexander Humboldt, with the chemists Gustave Rose and Ehrenberg, in 1829, fully investigated these deposits, which in due course were exploited for their wealth.

One of the earliest industrial applications of this rare metal, platinum, was its use by various English potters in the production of all kinds of pottery articles for domestic use, enriched with a thin deposit of shining metallic platinum, so that at a cursory glance they might easily be mistaken for vessels of silver-plate. In an earlier chapter we have referred to the constant and systematic borrowing by the potter, of shapes and designs invented by the metal-worker and most appropriate to his technique. Now the way was clear for the production of pottery candlesticks, teapots, jugs, coffee-pots and similar articles for domestic use, which were thinly coated with bright platinum, fired to the glaze, so that they almost require to be handled in order to distinguish them from the metal pieces they simulate, when their weight at once betrays them. (*See Plates facing pp. 96 and 98.*)

For its use in this method of pottery decoration the platinum was prepared in a condition of minute subdivision by precipitating it from its solution in aqua-regia. This finely divided platinum was repeatedly washed in water to remove all traces of acid, and was then poured into an oily fluid or menstruum (prepared by dissolving sulphur and Venice turpentine in ordinary

turpentine), to which oil of lavender was added, as required, to thin the mixed fluids to a suitable working consistency for the pottery decorator.

Such a preparation can be applied to the surface of finished glazed pottery with a camel-hair pencil, and after this painted or coated pottery has been fired to a low red heat in a potter's muffle-kiln (just as ordinary gilding is fired), the glaze is completely covered and disguised by a solid brightly reflecting film of metallic platinum burnt into its surface.

By such means the entire surface of the article could be coated with metal if desired, but an interesting departure was taken in the introduction of patterns to diversify the metallic surfaces. The simplest patterns used for this purpose consisted of little more than a series of wavy or interlacing lines (recalling the fashion of the *vermicelle* gilding on the porcelains of Sèvres), where the applied platinum preparation had been wiped out with a sharpened stick before it was fired to the glaze. More definite and elaborate patterns of trees, with birds in their flowering branches and so forth, were contrived by the aid of what is known as a "resist." When this last-mentioned method is followed a pattern is painted on the fired glaze, or it may be transferred from a print taken off an engraved copper-plate, in a "resist" medium of honey or sugar syrup (glycerine was often used for this purpose in later days), and the platinum preparation is applied over this in a thin and even layer.

The piece of pottery which has been so far prepared is afterwards washed in a bath of water and gently rubbed with a flock of cotton-wool while it is immersed, when the coating of platinum preparation peels away



“SILVER LUSTRE” CANDLESTICK

“Pearl” Ware with platinum
Pattern scraped out before firing
Mark : Impressed “WEDGWOOD”

Height 6 in., width (base) $3\frac{1}{4}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

exactly where the “resist” had been applied. The article is then dried in a gentle warmth, in a place as free from dust as possible, and is finally fired in the ordinary muffle-kiln. After the kiln has cooled the pottery is found to be coated with a solid film of bright platinum, except where the “resist” had been applied, for those features of the design still exhibit the unaltered colour of the glazed pottery.

In addition to its widespread use on the cream-colour and “pearl” wares during the later years of the eighteenth century, this silvery looking film of platinum was frequently applied over a canary-yellow glaze, one of the popular inventions of the period. The simple jugs, teapots, and similar examples decorated with this combination are esteemed among collectors of the minor earthenwares of the period—more, I think, than their merits or beauty warrant.

Another of these popular shining metallic effects, this time resembling brightly burnished copper, was obtained by the application to the pottery of a solution of gold¹ prepared by a similar method to that used for platinum. By its application to the ordinary glazed red terra-cotta pottery all kinds of table ware, but especially teapots, jugs, and coffee-pots—which present, at the first glance, the most deceptive resemblance to vessels fashioned in bright copper—were manufactured in the Staffordshire and other British potteries, in great quantities. Usually the entire surface of such articles

¹ This preparation was the stepping-stone to the production of what is known as “liquid” gold, which has now replaced, to a very considerable extent, the older methods of gilding for all but the more expensive kinds of pottery and porcelain. Even the Chinese and Japanese potters make great use of “liquid” gold in the decoration of their contemporary pottery.

displays this brilliant sheen, though there are many specimens to be met with (still, I fear, manufactured, for they abound everywhere) in which one or more bands of white slip have been applied on the red clay before the pieces were fired to the "biscuit" state. After they had been glazed and fired, fine patterns in simple open scrollery or in interlacing meanders were painted over the white bands in the "lustre" preparation, and when this was finally fired in the muffle-kiln, a purple stain was produced over the white, which modifies and softens the tone of the golden or copper-coloured films.

Excellent examples of all these varieties of the Staffordshire "lustre" pottery have been conveniently grouped in wall cases in Room 138 of the Ceramic Department of the Victoria and Albert Museum. This choice and instructive collection will repay the most careful examination, as it comprises examples of practically all the types and forms that are known. Such an assemblage of selected examples deserves to be better known among collectors of our English wares, for it illustrates the history and development of this simple but intriguing branch of our decorative pottery as no verbal description could conceivably do. Moreover, such collections are of importance as a standing testimony to the skill and resource which these Staffordshire potters and decorators displayed in the use of somewhat unpromising materials, during the first glow of their invention and before they had become hackneyed by trivial or unworthy use.

An additional application of the "gold lustre" which merits attention is its use on the ordinary cream-colour and "pearl" wares. In these examples the purple stain which the gold imparts to the glaze is more evident



"SILVER LUSTRE" TEA-TRAY

Black basalt with design in platinum
Mark: Impressed "WEDGWOOD" (Circa 1800)
Length $12\frac{1}{4}$ in., width $10\frac{1}{8}$ in.

Falcke Collection, British Museum.

than in the metallic-looking specimens produced on a red body. The bulb pots, shell dessert dishes and plates, and the "twig" baskets and "nautilus" centrepieces provide us with many favourite and beautiful examples of this use of "gold lustre." The general effect presented by such pieces is that of a rich but subtle purple ground colour (the stain) with iridescent films of "shot" metal gleaming upon it. The rounded or softly modelled surfaces of the pottery in these shapes lend additional value to the lustrous effect, and when such dishes and open-work baskets, filled with fruit and nuts, appeared on the dark polished table or snowy napery they were charming objects indeed ! (*See* Plate facing p. 94.)

CHAPTER XI

WEDGWOOD'S PUBLIC WORK

THE labours and triumphs of Josiah Wedgwood as a potter which exercised such a far-reaching influence on contemporary pottery manufacture at home and abroad, though they represent the main streams of his activities, were diversified by much patient and valuable toil in a number of public services to his native district of North Staffordshire and to the country at large, which merit consideration from all students of the man and his epoch.

The vital question of education in the widest sense as it concerned himself and his children seems to have been ever present to his mind. His numerous notebooks and his correspondence abound in references to the subject, as well as to the plans he so persistently carried into effect for acquiring a library of scientific books, collections of shells, fossils, seaweeds, and other specimens of natural history.

While he was so fully alive to the value of the widest education for himself and his children he seems to have been equally desirous that his workpeople and the labouring population of the district generally should share in these advantages as far as possible. He realized more fully than the majority of his compeers in England that a workman whose natural powers had been developed by learning to read, write, and cipher would be more



A MADONNA

"Pearl" Ware, tinted

Height $14\frac{3}{4}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

competent to make and decorate the superior pottery he desired to send out into the world, and in spite of much discouragement such as usually attends the efforts of pioneers he persevered in these labours to the end of his life with ever-increasing success.

A free school for the children of Burslem had been established in 1749, while Wedgwood was living at the other end of the Potteries during his early partnerships, and in 1760 the principal manufacturers petitioned the Lords of the Manor for a piece of the waste land lying near the centre of the town, on which they might erect a school building, as it was found that two-thirds of the children of the labouring population were put directly to work, as soon as they were able to undertake the simplest forms of labour in a factory, without book learning of any kind. In furtherance of this project the principal manufacturers in the town subscribed £10 each, and Josiah Wedgwood, his elder brother Thomas, as well as their relative, Burslem Wedgwood,¹ each gave this amount. For some reason which has never been clearly explained, this project of erecting a schoolhouse seems to have been abandoned at the time, and in its place a new market hall or shambles was built in the central square of the town.²

Fittingly enough, as testimony to the need of a school, there is a reference in John Wesley's "Journal" which mentions the impressions made on his mind during his visit to the town in March, 1760, when he conducted

¹ This Christian name, Burslem, has led to some confusion, but it is quite clear that this well-known potter was so christened.

² An illustration of this building, showing also a corner of "The Big House," the residence of Josiah Wedgwood's cousins, will be found in Mr. Frank Falkner's work: "The Wood Family of Burslem." Chapman & Hall, Ltd., London, 1912.

two open-air preachings in the market-place, in the evening hours after the potters had ceased work: "Deep attention sat on every face, though as yet accompanied by deep ignorance." Writing some four years later during a subsequent preaching tour, he then considered the "poor potters more civilized people than the better sort (so called) at Congleton."

Concurrently with these efforts for the provision of some better education for the labouring population of the district, in which Wedgwood's interest never slackened and which has been transmitted to his descendants in full measure, his mind was busied in devising schemes for the improved technical training of all his work-people, such as the plate and dish makers, but more especially those who were intended to become painters and modellers. In a letter to Bentley, written about this time, he makes some pregnant observations on these matters :—

"A waking notion haunts me very much of late, which is, the beginning of a regular drawing and modelling school to train up artists for ourselves.¹ I would pick up some likely boys of about twelve years old, and take them as apprentices until they are twenty or twenty-one, and when they had made some tolerable proficiency, they should practise with outlines of figures upon Vases which I should send to you to be filled up. . . . When you wanted any hands you could draft them out of this School."

Meantime their only course was to follow the example of the earlier English porcelain factories, such as those at Bow, Chelsea, and Worcester, and employ such suitable workers as could be secured from among the Birmingham jappanners or the fan-painters, coach-painters

¹ The same idea was acted upon at Worcester and Derby, as well as at Sèvres, Vienna, Copenhagen, St. Petersburg, and other famous porcelain works in Europe.



SLAB WITH DESIGN BY BARTOLOZZI AFTER CIPRIANI

Pale blue jasper. Painted in dry
"encaustic" colours. *Circa 1776*

Length $14\frac{1}{8}$ in., depth $8\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Franks Collection, British Museum.



CLASSIC DRUM
(To be used as bulb pot)

“Pearl” earthenware, with grey
mottled stripes, black bands
and gilt ornament

Height $6\frac{1}{4}$ in., diameter $4\frac{3}{8}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

and letterers of London. Quite a considerable number of male and female painters were from time to time recruited from among those who were already experienced in such callings, and they were employed in painting the "encaustic" vases and other ornamental pottery of that type on the black, buff, and red bodies, but more especially for enamelling the coloured borders and other excellent patterns with which his fine earthenware services were decorated when that important branch of his business was fully developed.

Another branch of Josiah Wedgwood's public activities which was of the first importance to the thriving industries of North Staffordshire, and incidentally brought about something like a revolution in the social life of its people, was concerned with the construction and maintenance of better means of communication. There were two related branches of this question: (1) the construction of better roads between the various pottery towns so as to link them into a whole and include the immediately surrounding agricultural and mining districts, and (2) the improvement of means of communication with the principal seaports, particularly those on the west coast, as well as with the more important manufacturing and commercial centres, so that Stoke and Burslem should be brought nearer to Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Bristol and London. All the important pottery manufacturers of North Staffordshire, who were striving so assiduously at this time to increase their business with the important commercial centres in the British Isles or overseas, had become convinced by actual experience of the imperative necessity for much better means of transport for their imported clays, flints and other essential

materials, as well as for their own finished and fragile manufactures which had become an important feature of our international commerce and were soon to be known all over the world.

Ways and communications between the various pottery towns and villages were thoroughly bad, while the shortest route from the important town of Burslem to any principal turnpike road was either to join the through road from Liverpool to London at the hamlet of Lawton on the borders of the Cheshire plain, or the Newcastle and Uttoxeter turnpike at Stoke-on-Trent—an important artery of traffic which was continued beyond Uttoxeter by way of Derby, Leicester, and Bedford to London. The ancient bridle-lanes and roadways to Bewdley and Bridgnorth, on the banks of the Severn, were still extensively used for the pack-horse traffic by which goods were conveyed in either direction. From contemporary records left by Wedgwood and his fellow manufacturers it appears that the journey from Burslem to the Severn valley at either of these places and back again occupied four days, and was by all accounts a rough and exhausting business for man and beast.

Northwards from the district the roads appear to have been in an even worse condition, if such a state of things could be possible, for Arthur Young, the famous agriculturist, writing of his "Tour into the North of England," in 1768, says:—

"At Knutsford, it is impossible to describe these infernal roads in terms adequate to their deserts.¹ . . . The road thence to Newcastle-under-Lyme is in general a paved causeway, as narrow as can be con-

¹ It was on this roadway between Knutsford and Warrington that Josiah Wedgwood had his leg injured; and it was while he was confined to bed, in Liverpool, with this injury, that he made the acquaintance of Thomas Bentley.

JASPER TRAY

Length 13'6 in., diameter 11 in.

Franks Collection, British Museum.



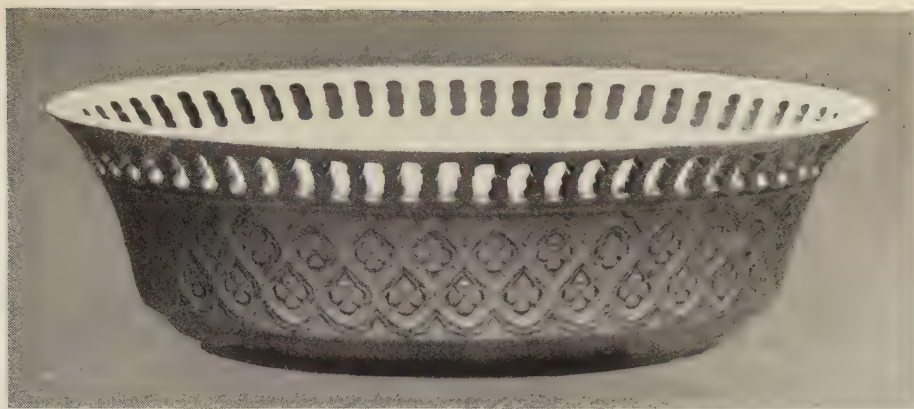
ceived, and cut into perpetual holes, some of them two feet deep measured on the level; a more dreadful road cannot be imagined, and wherever the country is the least sandy the pavement is discontinued and the ruts and holes are most execrable. I was forced to hire two men at one place, to support my chaise from overthrowing, in turning out for a cart of goods overthrown and almost buried. Let me persuade all travellers to avoid this terrible country, which must either dislocate their bones with broken pavements, or bury them in muddy sand."

He likewise describes the road from Newcastle-under-Lyme to Burslem, via the ancient church at Wolstanton and the descent to Longport, as being full of muddy ruts cut deep in the clayey soil, while, as a general statement of the conditions which prevailed throughout the country, a writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* declares in 1752: "A gentleman in the country, or a citizen in London, thinks no more of visiting his relations than of traversing the deserts of Nubia."

Notwithstanding this almost incredible state of affairs, the first proposals for improving the local ways (roads they could hardly be called), and joining them conveniently to the principal turnpike roads which passed through the district or in its vicinity, met with determined opposition. The innkeepers of Newcastle-under-Lyme were vehemently opposed to any such project, because the main stream of traffic would thereby be diverted from this ancient borough, where almost every householder held a drink licence and provided accommodation for travellers; while the stupid conservatism of the district so far prevailed that Wedgwood was unable to carry a resolution at a public meeting held in the Burslem market-place, to construct only four miles of good paved road from that town to the main turnpike road which ran from Newcastle-under-Lyme to the

North. In the course of a few years, however, his perseverance and that of his party among the manufacturers gained the support of some of the most important landowners in the district, and an Act of Parliament was obtained in 1763 which authorized the construction of a length of turnpike road connecting the various pottery towns, and which also brought about the better paving of the villages. Even to this day the condition of the roads throughout the district leaves much to be desired, and one would need to borrow the language of Arthur Young to express a fitting opinion of them after heavy rains or snow.

The construction of a canal which should link the waters of the Mersey with those of the Trent and enable barges to pass from one to the other by way of "The Potteries," had been under consideration for several years before this time, and a preliminary survey to determine its most suitable course was carried out by James Brindley ("the navigator," as he was commonly called—hence our word "navvy") in 1760, at the joint expense of Earl Gower and Lord Anson, the most important territorial magnates of North Staffordshire. The survey was made and approved, but it was not until about 1765 that serious attempts were made to enlist public support for Brindley's scheme, when in the December of that year an open-air meeting was held at Wolseley Bridge, below Stafford, at which Brindley explained his plans and surveys to an assembly of the county gentry. These were discussed and adopted by this influential gathering, while it was at the same time resolved that a Bill should be promoted and brought before Parliament during its next session, in order to secure



EMBOSSSED AND PIERCED FRUIT DISH

“Pearl” body

Height $2\frac{3}{8}$ in., width 8 in.



LEAF PLATE

“Pearl” body, traced in green (under glaze)

Diameter 8 in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

the necessary powers. Wedgwood, who was appointed "Honorary Treasurer of the Undertaking," gave £1,000 as a contribution towards the preliminary expenses, and further promised to subscribe for a large number of shares in the "Grand Trunk Canal," as the waterway was to be called. The Bill was passed through both Houses of Parliament, in spite of somewhat formidable opposition, and received the Royal Assent on May 14, 1766.

To inaugurate the actual work of construction with fitting ceremony a general holiday was observed in Burslem on July 26th of the same year. The first sod of the canal on the Staffordshire section was dug by Wedgwood on the hillside at Brownhills, below Burslem, amid general rejoicings and festivities. A sheep was roasted in the Burslem market-place for the poorer workpeople, and at night there were bonfires for the populace and many supper parties among the manufacturers — with as much excitement and jollification as would have greeted the announcement of a great naval victory over the French or the Spaniards. The piercing of the canal tunnel at Harecastle was a formidable undertaking for those days, and proved a great hindrance to the work, for the tunnel and its approaches were about eleven years under construction before barges could pass through it, so that Wedgwood must have been heartily relieved when the canal was finished and open for regular traffic through all its course.

In the intervening years he had bought the Ridge House Estate and built on the lower part of it the works at Etruria, with its extensive range of wharves for the transport of his raw materials and finished pottery, together with ample workshop accommodation, the best

machinery, kilns and ovens and all other necessary appliances. In addition he had completed a series of catacombs where all the prepared clays could be "aged," each in its own place, from the simple red and buff terracottas to the precious "jasper." At the time of its completion this Etruria factory was the most commodious and convenient as well as the best planned and equipped pottery manufactory in England or, probably, in Europe. The business was partially removed to the new works from the Burslem factory in 1769, but its transfer was not completed until 1771. This was some few years prior to the completion of the canal, which had brought about the removal of the works to this more open and advantageous site, where there was ample space for such future extensions of the workshops as Wedgwood and his partners could secure business to justify.

As a natural consequence, from the position which Wedgwood had by this time attained as one of the principal pottery manufacturers in the kingdom, and, indeed, in Europe, he was impelled to expend much of his strength and energy in conferences and negotiations, parliamentary and extra-parliamentary, on the vexed questions which concerned the commercial relations between Great Britain and Ireland (at this time Ireland had its own parliament, sitting in Dublin, with separate Customs and Excise duties) and those between Great Britain and France. The hopes of men just then took on a most roseate hue, for the more sanguine spirits among the promoters of these measures looked forward to further extensions of such a policy to all the nations of Europe in succession.

In these important and intricate public affairs Wedg-

“MARBLED” VASE

Height 10 $\frac{5}{8}$ in.

Falcke Collection, British Museum.





wood represented, primarily, the general interests of all the important pottery and porcelain manufacturers in England. He had to work, in conjunction with others who represented the textile trades of Lancashire and Yorkshire, with the great ironmasters and those who were concerned in the varied industries located in the districts round Birmingham and Wolverhampton, and the glass-makers of Stourbridge and Brierley Hill, as well as with representative manufacturers from the lace and hosiery trades of Nottingham and Leicester.

The individual interests of the members of such a composite body of business men, drawn from a varied assortment of trades which were located in different parts of the country, were not to be reconciled very readily. Much preliminary discussion and adjustment of ideas had to take place before the various local Chambers of Commerce could present a united front on these projected measures. Even the philosophic James Watt, averse as he had always been to any active participation in political agitation, came forward with a pamphlet on the rational course of trade relations between Ireland and Great Britain.

As we view this question now in long retrospect, the gist of the difficulty would appear to have lain in the fact that the Irish Parliament, sitting in Dublin and legislating for Ireland alone, was determined to pursue the policy of imposing highly-protective duties on all imported manufactured goods from Great Britain. By such measures it was believed that the existing Irish manufacturing industries, with some others which it was thought might be established, would be stimulated and encouraged into prosperity, but, if these protective

duties alone should not prove sufficient for the purpose, all the Irish manufacturers were to be still further encouraged by liberal bounties on all the manufactured goods they could find markets for outside Ireland. Some such alluring vision of the advocates of high protection is as old as the kings of ancient Egypt, and has proved an underlying cause of wars from the very dawn of civilization. International commerce is viewed as a bargain in which the advantages are to be mainly reaped by one side, rather than as a free interchange of natural products and manufactured goods to the reciprocal advantage of both the peoples concerned, and the question has to be fought out and determined afresh after every period of international war or revolutionary turmoil. The clamant difficulties and perplexities under which the commerce of Europe is languishing at the present moment, enable us to understand with greater clearness what might otherwise seem obscure and devious in the ideas and policy of Wedgwood and his colleagues during the course of these negotiations.

The scheme which was finally elaborated by William Pitt for the settlement of the trade relations between Ireland and Great Britain had been under consideration from the early months of 1784, and in January, 1785, the "Eleven Resolutions" of the British Ministry were forwarded to Dublin for consideration by the Irish Government. They were laid before the Irish Parliament early in February, 1785, and were brought before the British Parliament on the 22nd of the same month.

Meantime, Wedgwood had discussed with many influential manufacturers and merchants the probable



"TERROR"

White jasper bust on
pedestal of black basalt
Height 7 in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

effects which these resolutions might entail on the more important of those English industries which felt their position threatened.¹ A working agreement was gradually arrived at among the manufacturers whose interests were focused in Manchester, Sheffield, Birmingham, Bristol, Nottingham, and the other important commercial and manufacturing districts, as to the line of action they should pursue in opposition to these "Irish Resolutions." In order that he might conduct these labours in the most effective manner, Wedgwood left his works in charge of his partners and settled himself for several months at 10, Great George Street, Westminster, in preparation for the contest which was about to open before the Parliamentary Committees. Here he had the assistance of one of his sons and of Alexander Chisholm, who acted as his secretary in the countless interviews and discussions that took place.

He seems to have been troubled and annoyed by the supineness or selfishness of some of his colleagues who returned home to attend to their businesses, or, like Matthew Boulton, proposed to set out on lengthy tours of pleasure and business. Wedgwood wrote to Boulton on May 1, 1785 :—

"We all know any house may be brought to remove, if those who made it will come forward as they ought to do. For myself I have only one plain simple line of conduct to pursue. I have promised those who sent me hither to *do my best* to prevent the Irish Resolutions passing into law. I have done so hitherto & will continue in the same, though I am even left *to do alone*."

¹ The readiness of the manufacturing interests to feel or counterfeit alarm at any proposal to reduce the existing duties on foreign goods is shown by a circular issued by some of the master-potters in 1803. The heading of this document reads : "Some Reasons for the Alarm taken by the Manufacturers of Porcelain and Earthenware on the occasion of the proposed reduction of £59 8s. 6d. per cent. from the duty on the importation of Oriental Porcelain, leaving it 50 per cent."

Wedgwood appealed to some of the principal London merchants and traders, but without much success, and the reasons he gives for his failure are illuminating as well as amusing:—

“The principal glover has a contract under Government and does not appear. The button-maker makes buttons for his Majesty & therefore he is tied fast to his Majesty’s minister’s button-hole. In short the minister has found so many button and loop holes to fasten them to himself, that few of the principal manufacturers are left at liberty to serve their country.”¹

In spite of Wedgwood’s efforts the twenty resolutions were passed through both Houses of the British Parliament, but, as it happened, they were bitterly opposed in Ireland, and only passed the Irish House of Commons by a majority of nineteen, and the Government, regarding this as a rebuff, abandoned the Bill for the time being.

Incidentally, Wedgwood’s public activity in these matters had been so important that it temporarily ruined his trade over the greater part of Ireland. His Dublin agent, Esau Clarke, declared that his business was ruined. “Many of the people of quality that formerly dealt with me will buy no more on account of your opposing the Irish Propositions, and many others will not buy from me because I cannot sell as cheap as the other houses,” while one nobleman said “that if more of Wedgwood’s ware came to Ireland, if the public did not break them he would,” a truly Irish form of revenge, seeing that the Irish Government would have had to pay for the damage.

¹ Wedgwood to Boulton, May 1, 1785. See Miss Meteyard’s “Life of Josiah Wedgwood,” vol. ii., p. 547.

CUP AND MILK-JUG

Floral decoration in enamel colours

Cup—Height $2\frac{1}{2}$ in., diameter 3 in.

Jug—Height $5\frac{1}{2}$ in., diameter 4 in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.



CHAPTER XII

WEDGWOOD AND HIS PARTNERS

WHEN Josiah Wedgwood, as a youth of nineteen, and hardly recovered from a serious attack of smallpox and its wearisome sickness, left the paternal factory by the churchyard at Burslem on the conclusion of his term of apprenticeship to his elder brother, Thomas, he is believed to have commenced in life as a manufacturer by entering into a partnership with John Harrison and Thomas Alders ¹ (whose name is quite as frequently given as Aldersea). At this time (1752) the firm carried on a business as potters in one of the hive of small pot-banks clustered together about Cliff Bank—which affords a wide prospect over the town of Stoke-on-Trent, past the old church and across the district called Fenton, from the north-west, where the main road climbs up to Harts-hill on its way to Newcastle-under-Lyme and the North.

In this insignificant factory, which can have consisted of little more than a couple of small ovens, together with the necessary sheds and drying kilns for preparing the clay, and others which served as workshops for the potters, the partners are reputed to have manufactured, as the staple of their business, the ordinary scratched-blue salt-glaze pottery which, though fallen from its high

¹ “ Mr. John Aldersea, at the manufactory at Stoke, where is now the Top Square, and his brother, Thomas, of the Honey Wall, were successful in making Mottled and Cloudy and Tortoise-shell, with lead ore and salt-glaze, and Shining Black of a very good quality.” Shaw, Simeon : “ History of the Staffordshire Potteries,” p. 175.

estate, retained some of its popularity in the country districts of England and Wales. Wedgwood's inbred passion for experiment and innovation would seem to have shown itself prominently even amid such unpromising surroundings, for this partnership, after enduring for some two years (1752-4), is believed to have come to an end because Harrison, the moneyed partner, was unwilling to provide the additional capital required in the business if it was to make further growth. He was, by all accounts, too eager for immediate profits, and quite unable to appreciate the ultimate value to the business of Wedgwood's skill, industry and enterprise.

Very fortunately for Wedgwood, as it proved in the sequel, as well as for the growing industry which had become centred in North Staffordshire, a much more satisfactory and valuable opening for his talents and energy was ready to his hand. Thomas Whieldon, of Fenton Low, one of the most skilful and intelligent potters of his generation, and a man whose integrity was proverbial in the district, invited young Wedgwood to join him as a working partner in his business at Fenton. The agreement which was entered into for this partnership has been preserved, and has been deservedly reprinted many times, as it is a fine testimony to the character of both men. It sets forth how Wedgwood was to have full liberty to experiment and to practise such secret processes of the craft as he might desire to keep to himself; a stipulation which might soon have led to friction, or unpleasantness at least, between lesser men, whereas this partnership seems to have been a happy one, successful in its working and prosperous in its results, from beginning to end.

The Whieldon-Wedgwood partnership lasted for its



WINE COOLER

Grey stoneware with
black bands and handles

Height 7 in., diameter 8 in.

British Museum.

agreed term of five years (1753-8), and every studious admirer of Wedgwood and his pottery sees in their fruitful collaboration one of the determining factors in Wedgwood's opening career as a master-potter. Now, at last, he was able to give free rein to his ideas and experiments with the certainty that they would gain in value from the sympathetic but more mature mind of his senior partner. Whieldon was many years older than Wedgwood (though he actually outlived him), and had been established in business at Fenton Low for some twenty years before this partnership was entered upon—indeed almost from the time of Wedgwood's birth. He had already secured a thriving and prosperous business as a potter, for, in addition to his manufacture of all sorts of domestic wares for local consumption, an important section of his trade consisted in the production of a great variety of little personal trinkets and other ornamental articles such as dainty snuff-boxes, tobacco-boxes, shoe-buckles, handles for knives and forks, small perforated strainers for liquids, tea-caddy spoons, and an endless variety of such pottery small-wares. He carried collections of these articles in his saddle-bags when he rode on his business journeys to Birmingham, Walsall, Wolverhampton, and other towns in the Black Country, where he vended them, personally, among the metal-mounters and other tradesmen by whom they were completed. They were skilfully mounted in white metal, in gilding metal, or in pinchbeck,¹ and other golden-coloured alloys,

¹ A word now generally used to designate a cheap imitation of any material or person of solid worth. The name was coined from that of a Christopher Pinchbeck, of Birmingham, to describe an alloy, consisting of 9 parts of copper with 1 part of zinc, which was extensively employed in the manufacture of watch-cases, jewellery, and small ornaments and trinkets of every kind. It was, in a word, a popular "imitation gold" of the day.

or they were set in light open-work frames of faceted and burnished steel. The variety and beauty of such articles as they were made by Whieldon and Wedgwood are said to have increased this branch of their business to a very considerable extent. This was due not only to the novel effects of colour and surface-marking displayed on the pottery, but to the precision and accuracy with which the pieces were manufactured—a qualification which is of the first importance in such articles as are intended for “mounting” in metal, unless an undue proportion of the pieces is to be broken in the process of mounting.

It is to the period of the Whieldon partnership, too, that writers have generally attributed the experimental work by which Wedgwood brought his famous “green glaze” to perfection. The snuff-boxes, tobacco-boxes, and spectacle-cases for personal use, and the modelled leaf-dishes used for presenting pickles, sweets, and preserves at the table, together with the neat and precisely fashioned tea-caddies, teapots, cups and saucers, sugar-basins, jugs, and other small articles, are fortunately too well known to call for detailed description here. Sometimes these articles were left quite plain, with no other enrichment than that provided by the coloured glazes, but the more popular types were those decorated with “sprigged” or embossed ornament, and then gaily enlivened by a coating of bright green glaze, or with yellow and amber glazes (each used in two or three shades) in addition. Surviving examples of these popular “cauliflower” and “pineapple” earthenwares, as they were called, are greatly prized even yet by admirers and collectors of the Staffordshire pottery of the eighteenth



JASPER PLAQUE: "A SACRIFICE TO CUPID"

10 in. by 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

century, and they deserve to be so treasured, for they represent the worthy first-fruits of Wedgwood's taste and skill. (*See Plate facing p. 30.*)

All these kinds and descriptions of English pottery have enjoyed the widest popularity from the time of their first introduction, for besides their widespread use in these islands they were exported in vast quantities to almost every part of the world, so that they proved a valuable addition to the stock-in-trade of pottery types made by the Staffordshire potters. It is both amusing and interesting to speculate now on the quantity of such articles, mostly of the "useful" kind, that must have been sent forth from the Staffordshire kilns since the time when the wares of this class were first manufactured on the commercial scale. Wherever English earthenware has penetrated as an article of regular trade these bright and simple productions have been in the forefront of the invasion; indeed, many of the specimens which are now treasured in the private collections and museums of these islands have been brought back to the land of their origin from various parts of Europe and from still more remote places in Asia and America.

The varieties of gaily coloured pottery with which the honoured name of Thomas Whieldon is emphatically associated include the several kinds which were produced by the skilful application of bright and richly variegated parti-coloured glazes on white or light buff pottery. These are commonly spoken of by their old names as "clouded," "mottled," or "tortoise-shell" wares because of the rich dappled effects of broken colour in which their charm resides and which have brought them such lasting

popularity. "Whieldon ware" has become the accepted designation among collectors and dealers for the earthen-wares which are glorified by this style of decoration, no matter who may have been the actual maker of any particular example, and though there are many instances in which the crude colour or the imperfection of the glazing ought to forbid such an ascription. Unfortunately this loose nomenclature is almost unavoidable, for potters' marks are all but unknown on articles of this class, and without their aid it is impossible for us to name with certainty the maker of any given specimen. The usual consequence has followed that the best makers of the wares of this type have had many inferior specimens "fathered" upon them; but so many choice specimens have been safely handed down to us and are now accessible in museums that we need not dwell further on the merits of the wares.

Before taking our final leave of this interesting branch of the English pottery with which Wedgwood was closely concerned, we ought to mention the modelled animals and birds, which sometimes recall rather comically the well-known Oriental examples from which they seem to have been imitated, and the homely and jolly old "Tobys," for these were frequently coloured in this style with great skill and the most harmonious effect. Whieldon, with his modelled "Squires" and other fine gentlemen, was a famous maker of these popular drinking vessels, and Wedgwood must have had a hand in their production. Who does not recall the exclamation of Gabriel Vardon in "Barnaby Rudge" when anything disturbed his jovial equanimity, "Pass me Toby, my dear!"



VENUS OR SUSANNAH AT A
FOUNTAIN

Height $3\frac{3}{8}$ in.,
width $2\frac{3}{4}$ in.



OMPHALE

Waxen white biscuit
(Circa 1775)

Height $3\frac{3}{8}$ in., width $2\frac{3}{4}$ in.

British Museum.



FEMALE FIGURE

Waxen white biscuit
(Circa 1775)

Height $3\frac{3}{8}$ in., width $2\frac{3}{4}$ in.

To return to the personal history of the potters. When the agreed term of partnership came to an end in 1759 Whieldon and Wedgwood decided to separate, one likes to believe, with mutual esteem and some regrets on either side. The more cautious or more conservative senior partner continued the business he had established at Fenton. Here he lived and worked to a ripe old age, in growing prosperity and repute. He filled the office of High Sheriff for the county of Staffordshire in 1786, and on his death in 1798 he was buried at Stoke-on-Trent. He had lived to see a number of the young potters he had helped to train and launch into the trade, such as Josiah Spode, Robert Garner, John Barker, and William Greatbach, established in thriving works of their own. Josiah Wedgwood, revolving in his mind the prospect of fresh fields of invention and research, settled once again in Burslem, the home of his youth, and now to become the scene of his labours and inventions until after he had built the model works at Etruria, where his descendants carry on his traditions and still manufacture the "green-glaze" ware of his youth.

Josiah Wedgwood's manufacturing enterprise at the Ivy House works, Burslem, appears to have flourished from its inception, which can occasion no surprise when we bear in mind the practical and commercial experience he had acquired during his partnerships at Stoke and at Fenton. During the latter, especially, he had travelled about the country in order to extend the Whieldon-Wedgwood business and that he might acquaint himself at first hand with the requirements of the metal-mounters and pottery dealers in the important towns of the Midlands, with whom their trade was chiefly conducted.

So rapidly did his trade increase from the time of this new foundation that in 1762, only three years after he had entered upon the occupation of the Ivy House premises, he rented a more commodious and better-equipped factory in close proximity, called the Brick House works. Shortly after this extension of working room he was joined by a first cousin, Thomas Wedgwood, who some years before had migrated from Staffordshire, and had worked as an operative potter at the Worcester China Manufactory (founded 1751) during the eventful opening years of that famous undertaking. Thomas Wedgwood became a partner with Josiah in one branch of the business only, viz., that concerned in the production of "useful" pottery. He appears to have been a valuable ally in the experiments for the manufacture of the improved cream-coloured earthenware which was of almost paramount importance to them both, for within a few years it became the backbone and mainstay of their enterprise. Both men were practical potters, noted for their manufacturing skill, and each of them had already gained a wide and varied experience, so that their friendly rivalry quickly bore fruit in the forms and decorations of the table adjuncts and services with which they sought to win the patronage of the well-to-do classes.

It must always be a matter for regret that no marks have been recorded by which the pottery made by Wedgwood at this period of his career can be absolutely identified.¹ A distinctive mark, stamped in the ware, does not appear to have been used by Wedgwood until

¹ Some of the large red-ware teapots with bands of engine turning made at this time by Wedgwood bear sham Chinese seal marks impressed under the base.

TABLE-CENTRE

Cream colour, enamelled

Height $23\frac{3}{4}$ in., diameter $14\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.



a later time, and we are forced to rely more than we like on gossip and tradition for our ideas of what was actually accomplished during the early years of the Burslem business. The relief tiles in white stoneware, mentioned by Simeon Shaw, have never been identified,¹ and they are probably no longer in existence, for the old works and residences in which they might have been found have long since been swept away. That Wedgwood continued the manufacture of salt-glazed pottery both in plain white finish on embossed shapes as well as with scratched-blue decoration seems undoubted, while the embossed patterns on the rims of some of the plates and bread trenchers in his early cream-coloured earthenware are similar to those which were in general use on the white salt-glaze wares of Staffordshire at the time.

The workshop methods that Wedgwood had observed in use in other trades as he had journeyed about the country in pursuit of his business were, to some extent, introduced in his own factories as soon as he was free to organize the methods of work to his heart's content. More and more, as we have seen, he strove to perfect his workmen in some particular branch of the series of operations, and then to retain them in full employment in that branch. Thus, while the general manufacture and finish of his pottery was improved, the output per man was also increased in consequence of the greater facility that was acquired in some particular task and the saving of time that was brought about by there being fewer changes in the day's work. Such improvements in organization, trifling as they may seem

¹ Unless the two lately in the collection of Dr. E. J. Sidebotham are examples.

in detail, made for greater economy and certainty of production.

All Wedgwood's experience had taught him the value of strengthening his position as a master-potter by securing the co-operation of suitable men as partners in business who could relieve him of a share of the duties and responsibilities entailed by his numerous avocations, for he generally had to act as first-workman, salesman, and general manager in one. By this time his skill and repute as a potter had begun to be noised abroad beyond the borders of Staffordshire, and he rejoiced greatly when he was able to secure the help of Thomas Bentley who was to become his life-long partner and most intimate bosom friend. Bentley possessed no knowledge of pottery manufacture except such as he may have acquired from books, for at this time he was a merchant trading and residing in Liverpool. He was a notable man of affairs among the public-spirited Liverpool citizens of the day, and had a local reputation as a scholar, for he had read widely in European literature and was fairly proficient in the use of several European languages, and what was remarkable in a man of this type, he afterwards proved himself as keenly interested and as acute in some branches of natural science and invention as Wedgwood was.

The circumstances which brought about this intimacy and thus led to their close personal friendship and their partnership in business are worth recalling. On one of his numerous business journeys to Liverpool Wedgwood had the ill-luck to meet with an accident on the road which caused him such acute suffering from his "game" leg, as he often called it, that when he reached



IVORY BOX

With Jasper Ware
medallions

Height $2\frac{3}{4}$ in.,
width $2\frac{1}{4}$ in.

CONVEX MEDALLION

(About 1786)

Design by Miss Crewe

Height 4 in.

GLASS SCENT-BOTTLE

Set with Jasper Ware
cameos

Height $4\frac{1}{2}$ in.

BASALT PLAQUETTE

With encaustic painting

Height $2\frac{3}{4}$ in., width $3\frac{1}{4}$ in.

his inn at Liverpool he had to be assisted to bed. A local surgeon of some celebrity was called in, and he, " pitying the situation of Mr. Wedgwood, a stranger and so much afflicted, introduced Mr. Bentley to him as a companion whose intelligence, vivacity, and philanthropy would quicken the lingering hours of pain." Bentley, with the utmost good will and cheerfulness, did all that he could to render the traveller's situation less uncomfortable and lonely, and with such success that in the course of a few days Wedgwood was able to get about a little during the best part of the day and transact his more urgent affairs. Such an abiding impression had been made on Wedgwood's mind by the cheerful disposition and engaging liveliness in conversation of his companion, as well as by a considerable general agreement in ideas and principles, that an enduring friendship seems to have sprung up between them then and there, which finally brought about their association in the making of pottery and the other contingent businesses in which they became partners.

For some years the principal business tie took the form of a Liverpool agency for Wedgwood's import and export trade, held by the firm of Bentley and Boardman,¹ in which Bentley was the senior partner. Before this agency was entered upon this firm had been principally engaged in business as exporters and shippers of Manchester textiles, and now the management of Wedgwood's shipping business in Liverpool was added, for they negotiated the freights and managed the dispatch of his consignments of pottery to Ireland, America, and

¹ This firm Bentley and Boardman is described in Gore's Directory of Liverpool, 1766, as " Manchester warehousemen."

elsewhere ; and attended to the unloading and forwarding of the cargoes of clays and other materials from the south of England.

From the time when Wedgwood had experienced Bentley's friendly concern after his accident he appears to have made various overtures in order to bring about a closer business co-operation, and he finally proposed that Bentley should leave Liverpool for Burslem, so that he might join in the management of the works. Bentley, as was but natural, expressed some hesitation in agreeing to the proposal, for it meant that he must leave Liverpool, where he thoroughly enjoyed his life among a wide circle of friends and visitors who shared his tastes and ideas. But Wedgwood was not to be denied in a matter on which he had set his heart, and in 1768 Bentley became his partner in the "ornamental" section of his business, and removed to Burslem to live in order that he might acquire a knowledge of the practical operations that were used in the manufactory. Here they studied and laboured together with the utmost intimacy and harmony, so that they remained the closest friends and associates imaginable, for nothing but a few passing clouds seems to have disturbed their further association.

Although hitherto Bentley had been a merchant and shipper he had preserved an open and ingenious mind, which had been cultivated by a wide course of reading. He is said to have had a competent working knowledge of French, German, and Italian, and seems to have laid a solid foundation for Wedgwood's library, while, doubtless to the surprise and delight of them both, he developed considerable mechanical ingenuity in devising

POT-POURRI VASES

(Circa 1800)

Figures in dark blue jasper
on glossy white stoneware

¹Height (top) 4 in. and 5 in.

In the Collection of Mr. William Burton.



improvements to the tools and lathes used in the works. Bentley's co-operation in the management of the business at headquarters in Burslem proved so efficient and valuable that, when the new works at Etruria were in course of erection, a house was built for him in the vicinity, and just across the fields from Wedgwood's residence, Etruria Hall.

As the works approached completion the partners decided, in view of the trend of their trade, that Bentley should fix his residence in London. He finally decided on a house at Turnham Green, a suburb sufficiently removed from the noise and bustle of town to offer a desirable country retreat, yet near enough to permit him to exercise a close supervision over the London show-rooms of the firm, and to manage the workshops for enamelling and decorating the pottery, which they had just acquired in Chelsea. At this time there were a number of shops of this class in different parts of London, while painters who could turn their hand to the painting and gilding of pottery were more plentiful than in Staffordshire. The partners decided, therefore, to acquire for their own use premises suitable for such work in London, and this seemed the likeliest district, for the Chelsea china works had brought many such workers into that part of the city. It certainly appears strange to us to realize a time when it seemed better to bring the pottery to the painters in workrooms more than 150 miles away, but Wedgwood and Bentley pursued this course, at least to the time of the completion of the "Russian Service" in 1774, and many of the best decorators employed on their general enamelled Queen's-ware services were trained in these Chelsea workshops of the firm, and

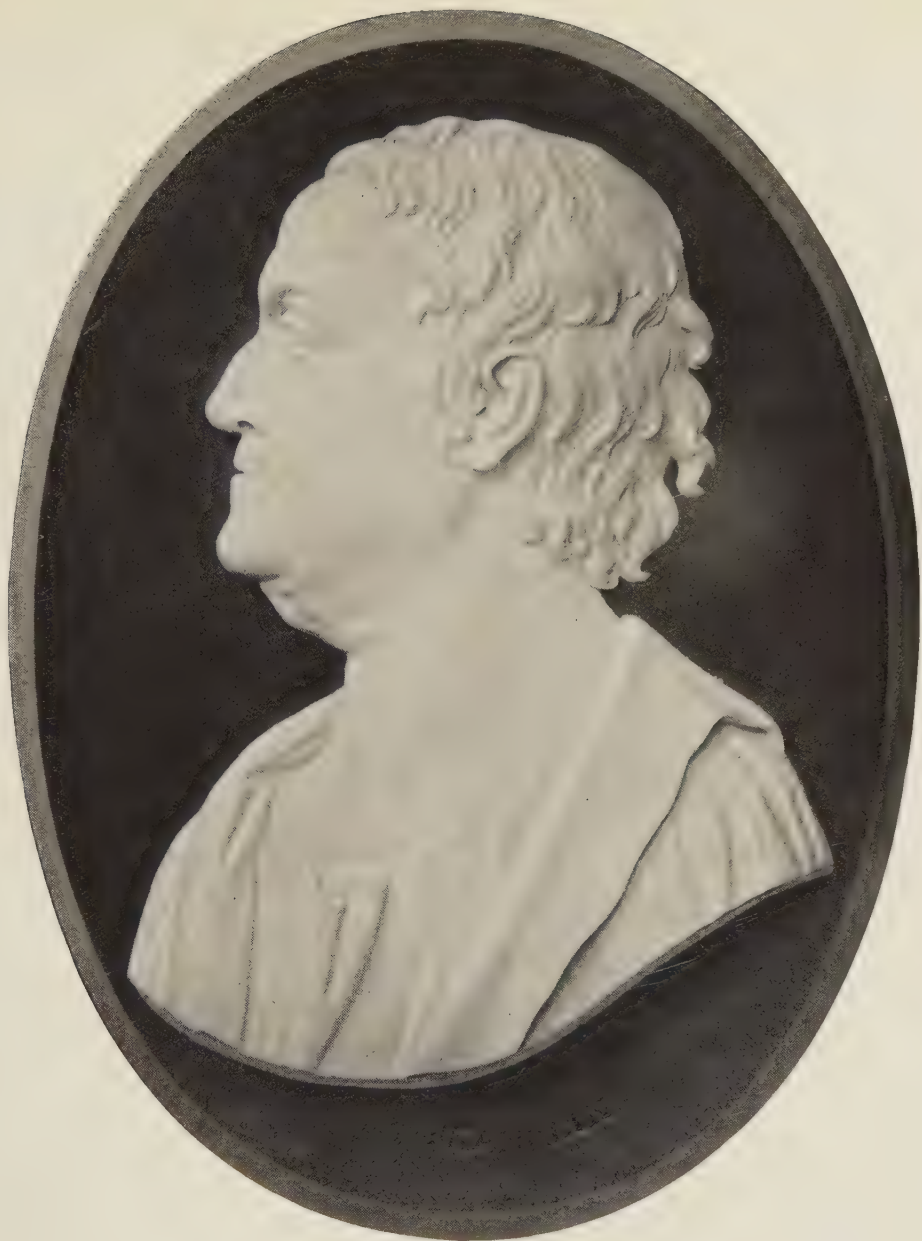
were not employed in Staffordshire, either at Etruria or elsewhere.

After Bentley removed to Turnham Green he soon made up his mind to reside there permanently, as the partners agreed that it was necessary for him to attend closely to the London show-rooms and workshops, though Wedgwood jocularly complained in his letters that it was impossible to drag him down to Etruria. Wedgwood occasionally went to London to discuss their business in detail, and during one of the visits about the end of 1770 they appear to have taken advantage of the delivery of some cameos which the Queen had ordered to display some of their latest vases to the King and Queen. They were evidently delighted with their reception and the recognition given to their work, for Bentley wrote to his Liverpool partner, Boardman, on the 17th of December, 1770 :

“ The King is well acquainted with business, and with the characters of the principal manufacturers, merchants, and artists ; he seems to have the success of our manufactures much at heart, and to understand the importance of them. The Queen has more sensibility, true politeness, engaging affability, and sweetness of temper, than any great lady I ever had the honour of speaking to.”

Bentley died Nov. 26th, 1780, at his residence at Turnham Green, and was buried at the parish church at Chiswick on December 2nd, 1780. He had been associated with Wedgwood in business for about twenty years, and he undoubtedly did much to foster the classic influence on the pottery made by the firm. He was also extremely active in the business of the “ Russian Service ” both in securing the commission and in obtaining the illustrations from which the paintings were made.

Thomas Wedgwood (the cousin) died in October,



BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

White Jasper relief on
light blue Jasper plaque

Height 10 in., width $7\frac{1}{4}$ in.

Falcke Collection, British Museum.

1788, and the business was carried on by Wedgwood alone for over a year. On January 18th, 1790, Wedgwood's three sons, John, Josiah, and Thomas, and his nephew, Thomas Byerley, were taken into partnership, the style and title of the firm becoming "Josiah Wedgwood, Sons, and Byerley." In June, 1793, a further change took place upon the retirement of John Wedgwood, and the firm was entitled "Josiah Wedgwood, Son, and Byerley" until Wedgwood's death on January 3rd, 1795. From this time the business seems to have been conducted by Byerley until his death in 1810, when it was continued by Josiah II. alone until Martinmas, 1823, when his eldest son, Josiah III. was taken into partnership, the firm being known as "Josiah Wedgwood and Son." In 1827, the other sons having joined the firm, the style was again changed to that of "Josiah Wedgwood and Sons," and so it remains to this day, except that the business has been converted into a limited liability company, and the present style is "Josiah Wedgwood and Sons, Limited."

CHAPTER XIII

WEDGWOOD'S PRINCIPAL ARTISTS

A RELATIVELY large number of artists of repute and distinction, some of whom gained enduring fame by their work as painters, sculptors or architects during the course of that general revival of the Arts in England, which was such a significant and important feature of our development at home throughout the eighteenth century, likewise turned their attention in serious earnest to the closely related question of design for manufactures. The erection or the re-modelling of a great many extensive mansions in London and its outskirts, as well as in the favourite residential districts of the country, gave rise to a lively demand for new types of furniture, household fittings and appliances of every kind. This, in its turn, called forth renewed activities among all those craftsmen and manufacturers who were eager to extend their businesses, and who were competent to produce such articles of furniture, household-appointment or decoration as were called for by these important and influential patrons and their clients.

The steady growth of the great industrial centres of Great Britain and the movement which was in progress among the more important manufacturers of the Midlands and the North of England (for the textile industries were also affected), afforded an extensive and valuable field for cultured advice and assistance of this kind,

JASPER VASE

(Procession of Deities)

Height $13\frac{1}{8}$ in., diameter $7\frac{1}{4}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.



so that in due time the influence of that important group of architects, who were also artists and designers keenly interested in craftsmanship, bore its appropriate fruit. This fertilizing influence was exercised primarily and most directly upon the productions of a number of active, enlightened and ingenious manufacturers, who were not only ambitious to produce the finest articles and domestic appliances that could be desired by their patrons, but were prepared, if necessary, to risk their fortunes in such enterprises. This courageous and spirited self-reliance seems to have been the determining factor which brought about the rapid yet sound and durable expansion of that group of English industries in which art and taste (by no means synonymous) are of equal importance with manufacturing skill and the power of commercial organization.

Matthew Boulton, of the Soho Works, Birmingham, and Josiah Wedgwood of Etruria, with his partner Bentley, were in the forefront of this movement among our manufacturers, and it would not be easy to mention their compeers in contemporary Europe, where similar efforts to theirs were generally stimulated and financed by the various sovereign princes or great nobles. We have already seen in a previous chapter how these two men could labour, both in conjunction and in rivalry, but our immediate purpose in this place is to trace the history of this movement as it affected more particularly the numerous types of pottery made at Etruria.

A fact which deserves to be emphasized in this connexion is that the principal artist and originator of fine results in the shapes, designs, and ornamental treatment

of the pottery manufactured by Josiah Wedgwood throughout his career as a master-potter was the man himself. He had been bred and trained in the earlier traditions of the Staffordshire school, according to which the proprietor of a pottery works was, as a rule, to which we find singularly few exceptions, his own principal modeller, designer and chief workman in one.

Although during what we may distinguish as the middle period of Wedgwood's career many commercial and public affairs, which were of the utmost moment to all the industries of North Staffordshire and not to its pottery industry alone,¹ absorbed such an undue share of his time and vigour, he yet remained as keenly interested as ever in his own personal work and business, as well as in the artistic aspects of his manufactures. The set of the torso of a figure for his bas-relief ornament, together with the exact disposition and weight of the lines and folds of drapery that clothed but to reveal it, the invention of the numerous coloured grounds for his favourite jasper body, the precise shade or tint of colour that would be likely to prove most popular in his several kinds of domestic earthenware, the correct entasis for the contours of a vase, of the rim of a dinner plate or a meat dish were, each and all, as interesting and ponderable in his mind and as worthy a subject for experiment as he knew them to be of value for the enduring success of his business. In all these directions and in many others of minor importance Wedgwood was undoubtedly

¹ The construction of the canal through the district with its access to the Mersey estuary and the navigable Trent ; the question of Champion's patent rights in the Cornish clays and china stones ; the various Commercial Treaties and other labours which necessitated frequent residences in London to prepare the case for the manufacturers and lay them before the Parliamentary Committees.



FRAMED MEDALLION WITH FLAXMAN FIGURE

No. 154 in Wedgwood's Catalogue.

Mark: Impressed "WEDGWOOD & BENTLEY"

Dimensions 9 in. \times 6½ in.

Schreiber Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.

a real pioneer. At this juncture the great majority of his fellow-manufacturers in Staffordshire, until they had been quickened to emulation by his powerful example and its obvious success, thought little of such details of refinement, the minutiae of the potter's craft, which alone can lead to perfection of manufacture.

The tradition which had passed into an article of the true "Etruscan" faith in my time at the works, that in the course of his daily rounds through the workshops Josiah Wedgwood carried a stout walking stick, ostensibly as a support on account of his lameness, with which he would suddenly shatter a vase, a teapot, or any other article that offended his eye by its indifferent execution or finish, with the exclamation: "That won't do for Josiah Wedgwood," is so true to nature that we can regard it as a sudden spark which serves to light up the inmost character of the man. No servant was allowed to be slack or indifferent in his employ. Wedgwood's boundless patience and perseverance in working out for himself every detail of the methods which his workmen must follow, and that passion (for it is worthy of the epithet) for perfection of construction and finish which all his work in clay reveals have, as they deserve, won the praise of every writer on his craft and particularly of those like Brongniart, Arnoux and Solon, who were most competent to express an opinion on such matters from the knowledge they had won by their own labours in similar fields.

The time arrived when the continued expansion of his business and the increasing demand for yet more ambitious exercises of his skill as a potter warranted him in securing the assistance of a number of distinguished

artists to supply fresh models and designs for his vases, medallions and plaques made in the various hard bodies, and particularly for his productions in black-basalt or in jasper ware, as well as for his more utilitarian works in the earthenwares. The personal skill, ingenuity and knowledge which he had so assiduously won in the course of his progressive labours played a great, even a fundamental part in his selection of these artists, as they prepared the way and made it possible for him to compass those triumphs of craftsmanship that were achieved at Etruria during the crowning years of his life's work.

The first great contemporary artist whose name rises in one's mind instinctively in this connexion is John Flaxman, R.A., and it is but fitting that we should sketch the main outlines of his career. He was born at York on the 6th of July, 1755, during the temporary sojourn of his parents in that city, for his father followed the trade of a moulder of plaster casts which he prepared and sold at the sign of the Golden Head, in New Street, Covent Garden, London.¹ While he was still little more than a bright and precocious child, wistful and gentle, his greatest delight in life was to be allowed to draw and model from the objects exposed for sale in his father's shop, so that some of the regular customers and visitors encouraged the lad with advice, and by the loan of books and prints, for everyone seems to have been attracted by the grave precocity and shy but charming manners of the child. Among his earliest helpers of this kind

¹ It is of interest to note that Joseph Mallord William Turner, R.A., most famous of English landscape painters, was born in Maiden Lane, Covent Garden, in 1775, at the house attached to the shop of his father, who was a barber.



JASPER PLAQUE, "SACRIFICE OF IPHIGENIA "

White figures on green ground
Outside measurements 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. by 6 in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

were George Romney, the painter (the two remained friends to the time of Romney's death in 1805), and a clergyman, Mr. Matthews, a well-read and cultured man, who, with the assistance of his wife, had made their house in Rathbone Place, Oxford Street, a famous resort of the "blue stocking" fraternity of the day, where budding artists and authors were lionized and petted in the approved fashion. Mr. and Mrs. Matthews were successful in attracting to their circle some young men of genius, for John Flaxman made the acquaintance there of William Blake and Thomas Stothard, and this famous trio became the most intimate friends, working together with great harmony of ideals in art and linked in the closest comradeship, devoid of all traces of jealousy of each other's success or discontent with their lot, the true precursors of the pre-Raphaelite brotherhood of the early Victorian days.

When he was only about twelve years of age Flaxman had gained the first prize of the Society of Arts in its annual competition, while at the age of fifteen he again won a prize from that Society, and, in addition, had a work exhibited by the Royal Academy which had been recently founded in 1768. Flaxman gained this distinction in 1770, and in the same year he was one of the students who were enrolled in the Royal Academy Schools, with the result that he won the annual silver medal of that year.

In the competition for the coveted gold medal in 1772, Sir Joshua Reynolds and his colleagues awarded the distinction to George Engleheart (1752-1829), who justified their selection by developing into one of the most popular miniature painters of his epoch and the

great rival of Richard Cosway in that branch of the painter's art. This painful but transitory disappointment only seems to have incited Flaxman to still greater diligence and closer study, so that he welcomed the means of earning a regular livelihood on which he could depend. It was about this time that Thomas Bentley first commissioned him to supply some models for the use of the firm of Wedgwood and Bentley.

Flaxman's first commission from the firm is attributed to the year 1775, about the time when his father, the image-seller, had recently removed to more commodious premises in the Strand (the place was then No. 420, and the site is now covered by the buildings of Coutts's Bank), and during the ensuing twelve years John Flaxman's principal occupation, apart from his drawings, studies and memorial tablets, seems to have been the work he carried out for the potters of Etruria. His industry during these years can only be described as prodigious for, in addition to the great volume of drawings and models he made for the firm of Wedgwood and Bentley, the memorial bas-reliefs and monuments he carried out at this time are to be found in many English churches and cathedrals. Even at a later period of his career, when his fame had become assured and his numerous occupations left him but little time to work for Etruria, directly, he continued to direct and supervise the doings of a number of foreign artists, adapters and copyists—Angelini, Dalmazzoni, Devere, Pacetti, and Webber are the best known, though the names of Manzolini, Mangiarotti, Frattodi and Cades have also been preserved—who appear to have worked under the general control of Webber, who acted as manager



JOSEPH PRIESTLEY

High relief; on glossy blue ground
imitating *lapis lazuli*

Height $9\frac{3}{4}$ in., width $7\frac{1}{4}$ in.

Falcke Collection, British Museum.

of the school in Rome. After some years Webber returned to work in England when an English resident in Rome, named Jenkins, seems to have paid the wages and generally attended to the affairs of the school, while he also had an agency for the sale of the pottery made at Etruria. These foreign artists were occupied in working up or adapting and copying designs from ancient buildings and remains, in procuring plaster-casts of suitable objects and ornamental details, and also in modelling designs of their own in a similar style. Some examples of their work are of such excellence that it is advisable to state in some detail what is known as to the genesis of a few of the more important exercises of their skill which appear in pottery.

What is always regarded as the finest example we possess of the work of Pacetti, in this style, is the famous jasper slab manufactured by Wedgwood and Bentley, which bears a frieze of figures, splendidly modelled in relief and known as the "Sacrifice of Iphigenia" (*see* illustration facing p. 132). This choice and well-known work is an adaptation on a reduced scale, taken from one of the bas-relief sculptures on the sarcophagus in which the "Barberini" or, as it is generally called in England, the "Portland" Vase, was disinterred outside the walls of Rome in the seventeenth century. The sarcophagus itself is still preserved in the Museum of the Capitol at Rome, and the reliefs of carved stone with which it was adorned by the Greek sculptors evidently furnished a number of the subjects and designs used for Wedgwood and Bentley's relief-work in black basalt and in jasper ware. The companion plaque in jasper, "Priam begging the Body of Hector from Achilles," was taken from the

carving on the opposite side of the sarcophagus to that which furnished the "Iphigenia," while the subjects on the two ends representing groups of Greek warriors were adapted in the same way.

At the present time these rectangular slabs in jasper ware are generally preserved, in simple frames of wood, as cabinet-pieces and this was one of the uses which Wedgwood tells us in his catalogues they were designed for, but, from the time of their first introduction, they were also freely used in the decoration of choice pieces of furniture as inlays. We find them applied in this way as framed panels in satin-wood cabinets, work-boxes, jewel-caskets, cutlery cases, clock cases, and book-cases, or used for the embellishment of fire-place mantelpieces and overmantels. For use in mantelpieces, more particularly, they appear to have been made and sold in "suites" which would comprise five or seven separate pieces which could be arranged in several ways, though the more general arrangement seems to have been to place the largest and most important slab in the centre, a smaller rectangular slab on each side of this, and a circular medallion at each end over the jambs of the mantelpiece. Favourite circular medallions for such positions as this last are the "Head of Medusa," a severe and dignified work often ascribed to Flaxman (*see* Plate facing this page), and the ever-popular "Bacchanalian Boys."¹

It may be added that there are a number of choice examples of the decorated work-boxes, knife-cases, and jewel-caskets in satin-wood and mahogany enriched with

¹ Excellently reproduced in "Josiah Wedgwood," by Sir A. H. Church, F.R.S. London, Seeley and Co., Ltd.



HEAD OF MEDUSA : MODELLED BY FLAXMAN

Mark : " WEDGWOOD & BENTLEY "

Diameter of frame $5\frac{3}{4}$ in.

British Museum.

"jasper" cameos to be seen in the collections of Wedgwood wares displayed in the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum; while some larger articles of furniture which are similarly ornamented are shown in the collections of eighteenth-century furniture in the latter institution.

The work which was forwarded to Etruria from Rome by Webber—who seems to have been the general-utility artist of the group employed in Italy—was mostly in the form of plaster-casts taken from all sorts of artistic treasures of Græco-Roman or mediæval workmanship. He sent over extensive and miscellaneous collections of "casts" taken from engraved gems or semi-precious stones (sardonyx, bloodstone, agate, etc.), which had been used as seals, signets, and other personal objects of that order, and for which there seems to have been an insatiable demand in the modelling-rooms at the Etruria works and for Wedgwood's private cabinets. When these objects reached Etruria they were adapted, under Wedgwood's personal supervision and direction, to all manner of current purposes. Finally they made their appearance in reproduction as the applied relief ornament of the little round or oval jasper-medallions which were issued in an endless stream to the metal mounters to be strung on muff chains (then largely used by both sexes), watch-chains and watch-fobs with pendant seals, and on the fashionable chatelaines, made to be sported by fine ladies as they went about the supervision of their households. They were also mounted in gold or silver settings on scent-bottles, opera-glasses, brooches, hat-pins, cloak-pins and clasps, and many similar personal trinkets or adornments. A few of these

varied applications of the smaller cameo ornaments which were made in Wedgwood's jasper ware are illustrated opposite pp. 76 and 122, taken from specimens in the Schreiber Collection in the Victoria and Albert Museum; where there is a series of wall-cases in which the multifarious productions of this class, in the contemporary metal mounts, are most interestingly displayed.

In addition to the artists whose work has just been described, a considerable staff of modellers and assistants was, of necessity, engaged at Etruria. As we have reviewed in some detail the works sent in by the modellers who were regularly employed or were commissioned for special purposes in London and abroad, by Wedgwood and Bentley, we must, in fairness, mention the work of the principal modellers who passed their lives in Staffordshire. The most important workers of this group were Hackwood and William Wood, both natives of the district, who were employed by the firm during the greater part of their lives. In addition, many working modellers of various degrees of skill and repute were employed for short periods. Of such men the best known was the volatile and unreliable John Voyez—over whose doings far too much ink has been spent by various writers—with others of even lesser note who came and went, perhaps more than once, as there was need for their assistance to cope with a temporary press of work, but of whose precise doings at Etruria we have little information.

These men, in daily attendance at the works, were expected to be able to turn their hands to any work that was urgently required from their department. If, for instance, a model or a plaster cast had been damaged



TOILET-BOX OF SATINWOOD

Inlaid with Jasper Ware
cameos set in steel
(Circa 1780)

Height $6\frac{1}{2}$ in., diameter $5\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Falcke Collection, British Museum.

in transit to the works from London or abroad, they repaired or restored it, while they were always at hand to "humour" a mould that would not deliver its clay "press" smoothly, or to reduce or enlarge a band of modelled ornament that Wedgwood might wish to apply to another shape of vase or teapot than the one for which it had been designed. Necessary and important as such jobs are, it would be a great mistake to suppose that these labours represented the whole of their work, they were but the recurrent incidents of their situation at headquarters, and such as happen on every works of the kind, and we have ample evidence that both Hackwood and William Wood carried out a large body of original work with great skill and competence.

Hackwood is chiefly remembered for his work in jasper and the other "dry" bodies. He designed and modelled many classic figures for the applied bas-reliefs, for his constant presence at the works made him the person to be called upon when an additional bas-relief was required for the extension of a "suite" which had been designed elsewhere. His portrait is preserved in the museum at the works, and has been reproduced in the volume on "Staffordshire Pottery and Its History," written by Josiah C. Wedgwood, M.P.

William Wood, the other regular modeller at Etruria, seems to have been chiefly occupied in modelling the "useful" articles which were manufactured in such variety in the cream ware and pearl body and, as is suggested elsewhere (*see* p. 38), doubtless had a hand in producing the models of the large earthenware figures and busts which were made at Etruria, such as those

reproduced opposite pp. 38 and 40. When we remember, in addition, the considerable body of workers of both sexes who carried out the enamelling, crest painting, and so on at Chelsea and at Etruria, we obtain a good idea of how Wedgwood was able to produce, year after year, such an endless stream of gaily and appropriately decorated services of excellent quality and appearance.

Height $3\frac{5}{8}$ in.

JELLY MOULD

“Pearl” body, enamelled

Height $5\frac{1}{8}$ in., length $8\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.





CHAPTER XIV

WEDGWOOD AND HIS FAMILY

JOSIAH WEDGWOOD occupies such an eminent position in our English life and labour during the eighteenth century that it is advisable to add some brief record of his family history to any account of his more immediate and personal activities. A numerous clan of Wedgwoods has enriched and enlivened the local history of East Cheshire and North Staffordshire, and we propose to trace here, with brevity, the main outlines of the family history in which he was directly concerned.

When this prolific family first became of sufficient importance to boast a recorded history its notable members belonged to the landowning and farming class. By the exercise of marked industry and thrift, as well as by judicious intermarriages with different local families of equal rank and similar position, several related branches of the great Wedgwood clan became of local importance in these contiguous districts during the Tudor and early Stuart times.

The family connexion with the making of pottery is of early origin, also, for a potter named John Colclough, *alias* Rowley, living in Burslem, who died in 1656, devised by his will "To Thomas Wedgwood of the Churchyard of Burslem . . . all my pottenge boards and all other necessary implements and materialls belonging to

the trade of pottinge (lead and lead-ores onely excepted).”¹ The Thomas Wedgwood here mentioned was the great-grandfather of Josiah Wedgwood, and at this early date in the history of Staffordshire pottery he evidently occupied the “Churchyard Works,” which will always be held in remembrance because Josiah Wedgwood was born in the master’s house of that works, and afterwards served his apprenticeship there to the art of pottery-making, as we have already said in our introductory chapter.

From this period, or, say, the middle of the seventeenth century, Burslem and the whole locality as far round as Tinkersclough on the side towards Hanley and away to Chell and Red Street beyond Dimsdale and Bradwell Wood to the north-west, was an important and thriving centre of pottery manufacture. The large platters and dishes of “combed” and “marbled” wares, or the more elaborate productions of the “slip” potters, with the famous Thomas Toft at their head, remain to testify to the spirit of research and experiment that was already manifesting its lusty youthfulness and vigour.

Those Wedgwoods who were already established as potters in the central part of this northern section of the Potteries district must have been among the most important master-potters there, for some of them not only dug their own clays, as was the general custom, but owned the mines and won the coal with which their pottery was fired. First in importance among them were the Thomas and John Wedgwood of the Big House,

¹ This exception was probably due to the value of lead-ore at the time and the ready sale it would command in the district *for cash*.



CANDLESTICKS

Blue and white jasper
(Circa 1780-90)

Height $10\frac{1}{4}$ in., base $3\frac{3}{4}$ in., square

Falcke Collection, British Museum

Burslem, who carried on an extensive pottery-making business at several factories in the town, and, in addition, owned mines of coal and fireclay which they worked for their own use as well as for sale among the neighbouring potters. While, therefore, Josiah Wedgwood was a son, grandson and great-grandson of potters in a direct line, his brothers, cousins, and uncles were notable figures in the industry also, and some of them owned and conducted businesses which were among the best of their day and generation in Staffordshire.

When Josiah Wedgwood returned to settle in Burslem, in 1759, after the expiration of his partnership with Thomas Whieldon at Fenton (*see* p. 119), the paternal factory, the Churchyard Works, remained in possession of his elder brother Thomas, to whom he had been apprenticed. He accordingly rented from his uncles of the Big House a small factory which was commonly known as the Ivy House Works, together with an attached dwelling-house suitable as a residence for its proprietor or manager. This house became his home for many years, and here, within a little while, he installed his bride, Sarah Wedgwood, the daughter and co-heiress of Richard Wedgwood, of Spen Green, near Congleton, Cheshire, a well-to-do provision merchant and a factor of corn and cheese.

They were married at the fine old church at Astbury, near Congleton, on January 25th, 1764, and their union was soon blessed by a troop of happy children ; the eldest, Susannah, was baptized at Burslem on January 2nd, 1765, John in 1766, Richard in 1767, Josiah in 1769, and Thomas in 1771.

Susannah married R. W. Darwin, a son of Josiah

Wedgwood's intimate friend and physician, Erasmus Darwin, who was at this time resident in Lichfield. She became the mother of Charles Robert Darwin, the naturalist and author of "The Origin of Species," while subsequent marriages between Wedgwoods and Darwins have maintained and extended the bonds of friendship and truth-seeking that were woven between Josiah Wedgwood and Erasmus Darwin in the early days of their intimacy.

John Wedgwood, the eldest son, seems to have been a partner in the pottery business at Etruria for about three years only (1790-93), as, in the latter year, he retired from the firm to take up a partnership in the London and Middlesex Bank. The affairs of this institution became seriously involved during the disastrous years of the Napoleonic Wars, and in 1816 the business was taken over by Messrs. Coutts. John Wedgwood was an enthusiastic gardener and botanist, and is said to have founded the Horticultural Society,¹ which seems appropriate when we remember his descent and his relationship with the Darwin family.

Josiah Wedgwood II. was admitted to a partnership in the business at Etruria when he came of age, in 1790, and one of his early enterprises for the extension of the business was to undertake a continental tour with Byerley, in the course of which they were to exhibit a copy of the famous "Portland Vase" and other notable productions of Etruria at various European Courts. They first travelled to The Hague, where, through the introduction of Lord Auckland, the British Ambassador, the specimen vase and other examples were shown to

¹ "A History of the Wedgwood Family," loc. cit., p. 180.

COVERED SUGAR BASIN

Cane body with applied reliefs in red terra-cotta

Height $5\frac{1}{2}$ in., width at handles $7\frac{3}{4}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

TABLE ORNAMENT

Cane body with white jasper reliefs to imitate an iced cake

Height $5\frac{1}{2}$ in., width $7\frac{7}{8}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.



the Prince and Princess of Orange, and afterwards to the principal notabilities of the town. They proceeded by way of Amsterdam to Hanover, Berlin, Frankfort, and Dresden, doing business where they could, and acquiring information which was of value in their future relationships with dealers and agents in the important towns. While they were at Dresden they visited the famous porcelain works at Meissen, a visit which seems to have given birth to a legend that the elder Josiah Wedgwood once visited Dresden and offered to purchase the porcelain works of Meissen. There is no evidence that Josiah Wedgwood, the father, ever visited Germany; had he done so there would have been an account of the journey in his journals or correspondence.

The times were anything but propitious for the business success of such a journey, for all Central Europe was still seething with the unrest and unsettlement caused by the revolutionary outbreak in France. The copy of the "Portland Vase" in Wedgwood's jasper was naturally viewed with great admiration, as well as the other examples of the ornamental productions of Etruria that were displayed, but, in spite of the general admiration and praise, it seems doubtful whether much direct business was done on the tour, apart from a strengthening of the various continental agencies and the general advertisement of the Wedgwood manufactures, which seems to have borne fruit in later days.

In 1793, when John Wedgwood left Etruria to enter on the London banking business, Josiah II. took over his shares in the pottery business as well as those of his younger brother Tom, who was absorbed in his investigations in photography, and when Josiah Wedgwood.

senior, died on January 3rd, 1795, Josiah II. succeeded to the pottery works and the businesses at Etruria as well as to the estates in Stoke and Hanley, which at this time amounted to about 380 acres. At the end of December, 1792, he had married Elizabeth Allen, the eldest of the nine daughters of John Bartlett Allen, of Cressilly, Pembroke, who could claim descent from William Cecil, Lord Burleigh, the Lord High Treasurer and principal minister of Queen Elizabeth. After his father's death, Josiah II. removed from Staffordshire, the works at Etruria being left in charge of Byerley, and lived at Stoke House, Cobham, Surrey, and afterwards at Tarrant Gunville, Dorset, for some years, only visiting Etruria at intervals, and not more than two or three times a year.

He had another residential estate, Maer Hall, which lies just off the main road from Newcastle-under-Lyme to Market Drayton, which had been acquired in 1802, and the family removed to this seat to live in 1807, but owing to the troubles consequent on the French Wars the pottery business was in a very depressed and unsettled condition, and from 1812 to 1819 the family returned to Etruria Hall, partly from motives of economy, but principally, no doubt, that Josiah himself might exercise a closer supervision over the business. This change was largely dictated by the death of Byerley, in 1810, for it was necessary that Josiah should be in close touch with the business, the main source of the family wealth, and the family was only able to settle again at Maer Hall in 1819.

Naturally Josiah II. was in a much better position financially than some other members of the family, but



“ HEBE ”

Figure in white jasper
Pedestal in green and white jasper
(Circa 1790)

Height with pedestal $7\frac{1}{8}$ in.

British Museum. Presented by G. H. Vize.

he behaved in the most generous manner, regarding himself as the steward of the family resources and credit, while he made liberal provision for his less wealthy relatives. He was as proud of the business at Etruria as his father had been, and devoted great attention to its progress, though it will always remain a mystery why he parted with the cabinet containing the experimental and early trial pieces, which had been so carefully preserved by his father, to Elijah Mayer of Liverpool.¹

In 1823 his eldest son, Josiah III., became a partner in the firm, while his third son, Francis (Frank), joined in 1827. It was through this son Frank that the successive master-potters of Etruria have descended to the present day. Josiah Wedgwood II. took little active share in the management of the business for some years prior to 1841, when he definitely retired, while Josiah III. also retired in 1842.

Francis (Frank) Wedgwood then became the active managing partner, and he took into partnership for a short time (1843-5) a Mr. John Boyle, who had previously been a partner in the firm of Mintons at Stoke-on-Trent, while in 1846 he was joined by a Mr. Robert Brown, who remained a member of the firm to the time of his death in 1859.

Mr. Frank Wedgwood was then joined in the conduct of the business by his eldest son Godfrey Wedgwood, while his younger sons, Clement and Lawrence, joined the firm within a few years, and the works are now conducted by Mr. Frank Wedgwood (a son of the late Clement

¹ This cabinet and its interesting contents are in the Mayer Collection in the Liverpool Museum.

148 Josiah Wedgwood and His Pottery

Wedgwood), Mrs. Cecil Wedgwood (the widow of Godfrey's son Cecil), and Miss Audrey Wedgwood, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Wedgwood. Mr. Kennard Wedgwood, son of Lawrence Wedgwood, is President of Josiah Wedgwood (Incorporated) of New York, which acts as American agent of the firm of Josiah Wedgwood and Sons, Limited, of Etruria.

COVERED VASE

Cane-coloured Ware with encaustic painting
(About 1790)

Height $7\frac{1}{4}$ in.

Falcke Collection, British Museum.



CHAPTER XV

THE PRINCIPAL CONTEMPORARY POTTERS IN STAFFORDSHIRE

ALTHOUGH Josiah Wedgwood's widely varied contributions to the successive developments of the pottery industry in his native district were so important and, in many respects, so decisive of its future course and progress, a writer who essays to narrate the history of English pottery during the period of its extension covered by his lifetime finds it essential, as well as just, to devote careful attention to the fruitful labours of a considerable number of his contemporaries, whose achievements would, in themselves, have sufficed to render the district famous in the long annals of the potter's craft. It should never be forgotten that many of the important master-potters of North Staffordshire were not only the neighbours and friends of Josiah Wedgwood, but were in addition, in all the important affairs of that day and generation, colleagues and co-operators in those unremitting labours for the public good by which Wedgwood so manfully served the immediate locality in which he lived, as well as the larger interests of the people of these islands through the development of our manufactures and commerce.

Throughout the course of the eighteenth century the virile and adventurous spirit which is such a precious birthright of our mingled race found, or created

by its native force, innumerable outlets for its prolific energy and enterprise, both at home and abroad; but one of its truly vital manifestations will be found in the steady and systematic expansion of the wide range of our manufactures at home. The fundamental industries of mining and engineering, together with the canal-system which they brought into existence, the important textile industries which were principally located in the busy northern counties and in the West of England, along with that important group of industries which was concerned in the manufacture of pottery, porcelain, and glass, were all brought to a pitch of rare perfection during this period. In all these directions our people found abundant scope for their energies, so that the achievements of the later eighteenth century fulfilled the promise of its opening years in most abundant measure when, as a result of our practical accomplishments at home and in foreign lands, it came about that the English fashions in domestic things were widely adopted or imitated in every civilized country.

Many valuable treatises have been written dealing with the course of this evolutionary movement and its effect on English industrial life,¹ but our immediate purpose is to narrate and explain the notable inventions and achievements of the English potters in one locality only, that of North Staffordshire, which became, from this time forward, so renowned throughout the world for its pottery of every kind and description, from the simplest and most elementary crockery dish or porringer

¹ See particularly "The Growth of English Industry and Commerce," by W. Cunningham, D.D.



BALL-CLAY PROOF OF FLAXMAN'S MODEL OF PLAQUE, "MERCURY
JOINING THE HANDS OF FRANCE AND ENGLAND" (1787)

(Commemorative of the Commercial Treaty between France and England, 1786)

Mark: Impressed WEDGWOOD

Height $8\frac{1}{4}$ in., width (at base) 8 in.

Falcke Collection, British Museum.

to the most elaborate and costly vases and services that could be devised.

The general review of the life history of Josiah Wedgwood which is contained in the preceding pages of this work has served to introduce the more important of his fellows in the potters' craft who became notable manufacturers in the district during his lifetime, such as Thomas Whieldon, John Turner, Josiah Spode, and a number of others, who are only less famous in degree than the subject of this memoir. Such well-known men as the Warburtons, the Baddeleys, and the important families of Wood and Adams, recall the names which are so familiar to every student as those who gained both fame and fortune by their enterprise and skill in the manufacture of the Staffordshire pottery of that period, and whose descendants in so many instances have maintained their repute in the craft alongside the Wedgwoods of Etruria.

The achievements of Thomas Whieldon, who is so worthy of remembrance as the father of the modern movement in Staffordshire pottery, have been dealt with in considerable detail in our account of the Whieldon-Wedgwood partnership, so that they need not be referred to in this place.

The name of that eminent potter, John Turner, first appears about 1756, when he was in partnership with Robert Bankes as a manufacturer of the white stoneware pottery of the day, and they occupied one of the many factories about the centre of Stoke-on-Trent.¹

¹ The site is now covered by a portion of the factory of Messrs. W. T. Copeland & Sons, the old Spode factory.

In or about 1762 Turner severed this connexion with Bankes and established himself in the works that was to become so famous at Lane End (now Longton, the most southerly of the pottery towns), where he manufactured the ordinary white stoneware and cream-coloured earthenware on an extensive scale. His standing and reputation in the district increased so steadily that in 1775, as we have seen, he was selected as the colleague of Josiah Wedgwood to voice the opposition of the general body of the Staffordshire manufacturers when Richard Champion, as assignee, sought to secure an extension of Cookworthy's original patent for the use of china clay and china stone.

John Turner's individual work in pottery was of a distinguished order, for his finest productions have often been mistaken for imitations of Wedgwood's jasper ware. That Turner might never have made pottery of this type but for the success of Wedgwood's previous efforts may be probable enough, but I was able to prove, nearly twenty years ago, that this particular ware of Turner's is a fine stoneware, entirely different in composition from jasper ware,¹ as it does not contain a trace of barytes, the distinguishing ingredient in the jasper body. This fine material is usually more glossy of surface than Wedgwood's jasper, while it has, also, a more vitreous appearance. Owing to the difference in composition there is a decided contrast in the tints which are produced by the same colouring oxides, though the actual tints may be quite as beautiful. From this material Turner made an abundance of cameos, seals,

¹ "A History and Description of English Earthenware and Stoneware," p. 157. Cassell & Co., Ltd., 1904.

AGATE WARE VASE

White plinth in "biscuit" jasper

Mark : "WEDGWOOD & BENTLEY"

Height $9\frac{1}{2}$ in., diameter 6 in.

Falcke Collection, British Museum.



beads, shoe buckles, ear-rings, and suchlike articles, all most skilfully wrought, which were used by the Birmingham metal mounters and which are often confounded with those made by Wedgwood.

The first John Turner died in 1786, but his business was continued and extended under his sons John and William, who manufactured earthenwares and stonewares, for which they secured a flourishing foreign trade, the jasper-like wares, and an excellent "Egyptian Black." Some time after 1790, when the composition of Wedgwood's jasper became common property by the gradual leakage of his secrets, the Turners also manufactured a jasper of identical composition.

Another "Turner" ware is a refined, hard, creamy-white stoneware from which they manufactured great quantities of jugs, dishes, wine coolers, bulb pots and inkstands; while they also made in it terrines or covered dishes in the shape of fowls, capons, geese, etc., and there is a fine and amusing collection of such pieces in the Liverpool Museum, while there are a few examples in the London museums. In this ware the jugs seem to be most abundant now, and they are prized for their decorations in applied low-relief, which include ships, sporting subjects, and other topical devices. The belly of these jugs, coffee-pots, chocolate-pots and other useful articles is left in the creamy stoneware, while the "ribbed" neck and upper portion of the handle are usually coated with dark chocolate-coloured slip or occasionally with a dark greyish-blue or black glaze.

Few busts and statuettes are known of Turner's make, but there is a fine portrait bust of the second

John Turner, nearly life size, which passed into the possession of Mr. Bernard Moore, by whom it is highly treasured. This bust, which appears to be an excellent example of portrait modelling from life, is inscribed at the back "E. Ray, Modeller, Longton," and it seems odd that we should know nothing further of such an excellent modeller and his doings.

The business of the Turner family, obviously an important and extensive one, was seriously damaged and finally crippled by Napoleon's continental successes, as large consignments of their pottery were seized in several of the continental ports. William Turner crossed to Paris in an attempt to secure some of the outstanding debts, and was arrested as a spy and thrown into that dread prison, La Force. He was released after a time, through the representations of the British Ambassador, and returned to England, but these losses had so undermined their commercial position that the brothers felt compelled to give up the struggle, and they retired from business in 1803. John Turner became potters' manager for Thomas Minton, who was at that time laying the foundations of the famous Minton potteries at Stoke-on-Trent.

Marks.—The marks usually found are TURNER : W. & J. TURNER OR TURNER & CO. The Prince of Wales's feathers were also used as an addition, for the factory was sometimes called "The Prince of Wales's Works."

Another clever contemporary potter was Henry¹ Palmer, who had a works at Hanley Green, about a

¹ Many writers give the name as Humphrey Palmer, but, while there may be some uncertainty as to the Christian name, there is none as to the man or his work.



FLOWER VASE WITH PERFORATED COVER

Light blue jasper with
white relief ornament

Height 8 in., diameter $6\frac{1}{8}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum

couple of miles from Etruria. Palmer has frequently been described as an unscrupulous imitator and copyist of Wedgwood's vases, and there is no doubt that both Wedgwood and Bentley regarded him for some years as an unscrupulous and most objectionable pirate of their finest productions, which is no mean testimony to Palmer's skill. The trouble was accentuated by the fact that Mrs. Palmer is said to have been the active commercial manager of the business, and the firm at Etruria did not find her easy to deal with. A further source of friction was set up by that intractable artist, Voyez, who, when he left Etruria or was discharged from his engagement there, entered into business relations with the Palmers. It would appear that Palmer and Voyez successfully worked out the idea of ornamenting black basalt vases with applied reliefs in the same material before Wedgwood used the method. In the British Museum there is a vase of this kind (*K 11*),¹ decorated with figures in applied relief of "Venus and Cupid in Vulcan's smithy," and bearing, on the reverse, a trophy composed of a wreath, quiver, vase and ribands. This piece is signed "Voyez 1769," and under the base, on an applied circular wafer, in capital letters, "Made by H. Palmer." According to Miss Meteyard's notes of her painstaking and valuable researches into the history of Wedgwood's labours, this method of ornamenting the black basalt vases with black reliefs does not appear in use at Etruria until about 1775.

From all that we know of Palmer, he was a clever

¹ Reproduced on Plate xxxv of Mr. Hobson's "Catalogue of English Pottery in the British Museum."

potter but an indifferent man of business, so that after 1776 the works appear to have been conducted by a potter named Neale, who did some distinguished work in the subsequent years. He was Palmer's brother-in-law (the men had married two sisters, daughters of Heath, a delft-ware maker), and whether Palmer remained a member of the firm or not is uncertain, for the style and title of the firm was changed in that year to Neale & Co., and was so continued for about eleven years.

The statement has often been made that Neale had originally acted as London agent of the firm when he entered into the partnership, but I have no means of deciding as to the accuracy of this statement. In any case, Neale became one of the most skilful potters of the period, for between 1776 and 1786 he made much ornamental pottery in the finest contemporary styles.

Palmer and Neale during their partnership and afterwards Neale, when he conducted the business, made jasper ware of great merit, as some of their examples which are still in existence would do credit to any of the contemporary masters of the craft. Choice specimens of these productions may be seen in the collections in the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum. A small kettle in Neale's jasper ware is in the Hanley Museum, and is illustrated in "Staffordshire Pots and Potters." This example is a veritable little masterpiece for its proportions and ornament. Another kind of ornamental pottery in which Neale did excellent work was the "granite" and "marbled" wares, executed on cream-coloured earthenware and tastefully enriched with leaf gold. But for the impressed mark, I NEALE



GEORGE III

Cameo in white jasper
Mounted on black glass

Outside measurements, height 5½ in., width 3¾ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum. Formerly in Jermyn Street Collection.



ADMIRAL KEPPEL

White stoneware biscuit
Modelled by Flaxman

Outside measurements, 4¾ in. by 3½ in.

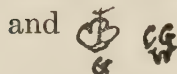
HANLY, it would often be impossible to distinguish these pieces from those made by Wedgwood and Bentley at Etruria.


Ultimately, the business passed into the hands of C. Wilson, who is well known for his productions in a fine red stoneware with applied black figures of the same type as those used by the Turners on their white-stoneware jugs. The ware by which Wilson is best known, however, and which he manufactured extensively, was what is called "chalk body," obtained by adding a considerable proportion of washed chalk to the usual ingredients of the cream-colour body. This addition made the finished pottery whiter in appearance, lighter in weight, and more favourable to the development of a bright tone in the underglaze blue of the printed patterns which the skill of the first Josiah Spode had made an important and rapidly expanding branch of the general earthenware trade. "Blue printing" became the popular style of decoration for the bulk of the "useful" earthenwares that were shipped abroad, and many extensive collections of such things, made by the best-known manufacturers of this period, are still treasured in America, while there is an admirable collection of examples in the museum at Stoke-on-Trent.

It should also be mentioned that the Wilsons were among the later makers of Toby jugs and figures of that kind, though their examples ("A Hearty Good Fellow" is one of the best known) are usually decorated with enamel colours which are sometimes too shiny of surface from being over fluxed. Such specimens, interesting as they may be as survivals, compare unfavourably with the earlier pieces decorated with coloured glazes.

Another branch of decoration for which they are noted was the manufacture of the Staffordshire lustres, both in the copper-coloured gold lustre and in the "silvery looking" platinum lustre. They must have manufactured large quantities of well-turned cups and saucers, goblets, and two-handled drinking mugs, as well as many figures of animals and some statuettes with these "lustre" enrichments, for examples seem plentiful enough in the dealers' shops even to-day.

The business is believed to have come to an end about 1820, on the death of Charles Wilson. The only mark I am acquainted with is the name WILSON impressed in the clay generally, though not invariably, under the base of the piece, while the marks



and  are also known.



Among the notable potters who contributed most actively to the extension of the industry in North Staffordshire during the whole course of the eighteenth century the Mayer family will always be held in remembrance, for it numbered in its ranks several potters who were distinguished by their taste and skill. The surname, Mayer or Meir, is of frequent occurrence among the early potters of Staffordshire and of Derbyshire (Cockpit Hill group), and men of that name were active, in both districts, from the days of the slip potters. Simeon Shaw states that an Elijah Mayer was a pot-maker at Red Street during the early part of the eighteenth century and that he was the father of the Elijah Mayer who made such fine and elegant pottery in the last quarter of that century. This potter occupied the High Street Works in Hanley, where apparently he at



"CLEOPATRA BEFORE AUGUSTUS"
(From a print by Burke after Angelica Kauffmann)

Cream-ware plaque
Painted in sepia colour
Circa 1786
Mark: Impressed "WEDGWOOD"
Diameter $13\frac{1}{2}$ in.

British Museum.

first conducted a business as an enameller for the trade, for in a list of manufacturers at that period (1786) he is not described as a potter but simply as an enameller. Though he soon commenced to manufacture his own pottery he was always famous for his enamelled decorations of various kinds, and one ought to single out for especial commendation the series of enamelled borders which he designed for his cream-coloured earthenware services. These are always lightly potted and skilfully finished in manufacture, while the enamelled borders and other decorations are excellent in their proportion and execution. Elijah Mayer's examples in this kind belong obviously to the school of Wedgwood, but they are so well wrought and so skilfully and tastefully enamelled that they would do credit to any potter. Fortunately, all our principal museum collections contain many specimens of this type in delicate schemes of colour, which are handled with skill and distinction, the admirable use of a rich black enamel, in conjunction with broad bands of bright yellow, being especially noteworthy.

Another style of production in which Elijah Mayer contrived some interesting things is seen in his cane-coloured and buff terra-cottas. The majority of his examples of this kind are excellently thrown and turned in the usual neo-classical shapes that were in vogue, or they are contrived in the shape of three or four joints of bamboo, stood on end and supported on a rustic base. The bamboo joints are, as a rule, lightly and skilfully decorated with foliage, tendrils and tracery in glossy enamel colours, usually bright blues and greens, outlined in black and with touches of white enamel to heighten the effect.

Elijah Mayer appears to have carried on these well-known eighteenth-century styles long after they had been generally abandoned, for he was still active as a master potter in 1820, when he took his son Joseph into partnership and the title of the firm became "Elijah Mayer and Son." After the death of Elijah Mayer the title of the firm became "Joseph Mayer" for some years, and then "Joseph Mayer and Co.," the business and its productions gradually declining after the death of the father. Joseph Mayer purchased the Church Works in Hanley in 1831, but he soon rented them (1833) to his cousin, William Ridgway, who eventually owned no fewer than six factories in the district, so that the name Ridgway became almost as famous as the name Wedgwood among potters and pottery dealers.

Marks: E. MAYER and after 1820 *E. Mayer & Son*
Joseph Mayer & Co

Another family of potters named Mayer owned and conducted a pottery at Dalehall, near the present railway station at Longport, down the hillside from Burslem on the way to Newcastle-under-Lyme. Three brothers were engaged in this enterprise, Thomas, John, and Joshua or Josiah (the name is commonly given as Jos.). The last named is said to have been the practical potter of this family and he is credited with the production of an excellent white stoneware, very similar to that made by the Turners of Longton (*q.v.*). The title of the firm was T. J. & J. Mayer, but it became Mayer & Elliot, Liddle Elliot & Co., Bates, Walker & Co., and Gildea & Walker, a firm which was still in existence forty years ago. The changes are noted, as they may prove of use in the identification of specimens

AGATE WARE VASE

Mark on applied medallion: "WEDGWOOD &
BENTLEY, ETRURIA"

Height $12\frac{1}{8}$ in., diameter $8\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.



of an early type which were really made by some of these later owners of the factory.

It seems unlikely that we should have heard anything of the doings of this branch of the Mayer family but for the name they bore, for this, stamped on the ware, has sometimes caused their productions to be confounded with those of their famous namesake Elijah Mayer. He married a Miss Mayer of Dalehall, who was probably a sister of the three brothers mentioned above, and that seems to have added to the confusion sometimes found in correctly attributing to the various potters of this name what each of them made.

T. J. J. MAYER. MAYER BROS. Mayer & Elliot

The family of Adams,¹ with its many branches and ramifications, has been well matched with the Wedgwoods in the making of pottery for more than two centuries. This family settled in Staffordshire from the adjacent county of Shropshire at the time when the spread of pottery-making attracted immigrants into North Staffordshire from all the adjacent districts, and a John Adams, described by Ward, the local historian, as a maker of the primitive black-glazed and mottled wares, is on record as having married a Mary Leadbeater² in 1654. This John Adams must have been a man of spirit and enterprise, for he built the first pottery works in Burslem, which was built of bricks instead of the half-timber construction generally used at that time,

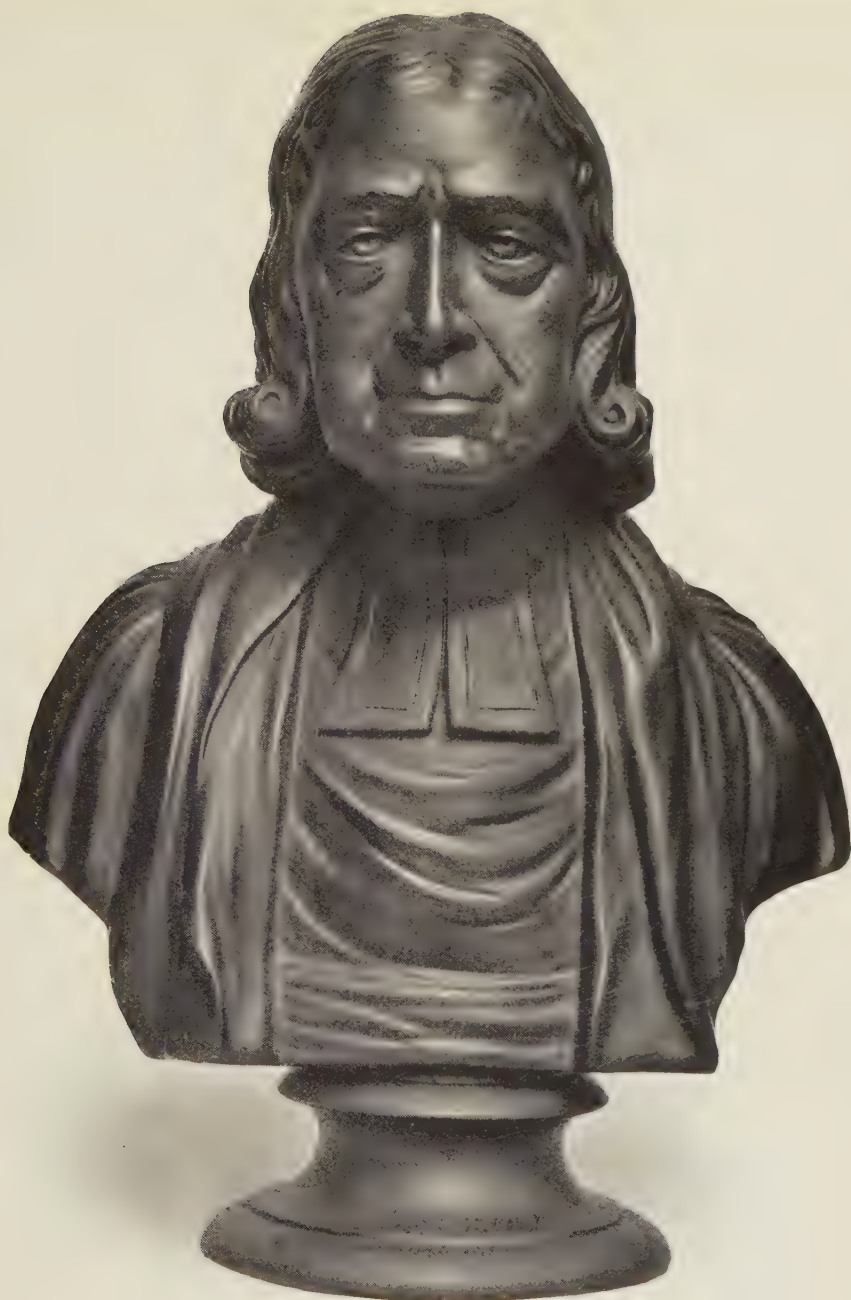
¹ An admirable history of this famous family of Staffordshire potters has been prepared by Mr. Percy W. L. Adams, under the editorship of Mr. William Turner, F.S.S. London: Chapman & Hall, Ltd., 1904.

² This surname is still quite common in the district, and it may have been first bestowed on some of those who pounded the lead ore used for making the old galena glaze.

and so founded the famous "Brick House Works." According to family tradition, this was about the time of his marriage or shortly afterwards, for he is described as the occupier of the house attached to this factory when he was chosen churchwarden of St. John's Church, Burslem, in 1657. John Adams was succeeded by his son Ralph, who is reputed to have been successful in improving the old productions and introducing the manufacture of other kinds of pottery, so that, about 1718, this factory was enlarged and another was also acquired in the vicinity. There were so many families named Adams in or about Burslem at this time that they are described in the church registers as "Adams de Holdin," "Adams of Sneyd Green," "Adams of the Brick House," and so on, according to their place of residence.

About 1730, just before Josiah Wedgwood was born, John Adams, the son of Ralph, must have been an important master-potter, for in addition to the Brick House he conducted a pottery at Cobridge, a mile or so away, where he manufactured principally the white salt-glaze ware and some other wares of the time. This John Adams died in 1757, leaving his heir a minor, and the Brick House was leased to Josiah Wedgwood, and was his principal manufactory until he built Etruria, when the moulds, plant, and workmen of Wedgwood & Bentley were gradually transferred to that place, and the Burslem factory was handed back to its owners about 1773.

The friendly connexions between the Adams family and Josiah Wedgwood were not severed when he relinquished his tenancy of the Brick House Works, for it appears probable that William Adams went with Wedg-



JOHN WESLEY

Black basalt

Height $8\frac{1}{2}$ in., width $5\frac{3}{4}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

wood to Etruria when that famous factory was opened for work, although its buildings were incomplete, in 1769. With two factories and this transfer to carry out while the new works were still a-building, Wedgwood must have been glad of his assistance. It is an oft-told story how William Adams became in this way the favourite pupil of Josiah Wedgwood as well as one of his intimate friends, for he remained at the Etruria works as one of the principal co-adjutors in the management of the new factory until 1780 or 1782, while Wedgwood and Adams remained on terms of the closest intimacy and uninterrupted friendship to the death of Wedgwood¹ in 1794.

As became the pupil of such a first-rate practical tutor, William Adams was an indefatigable experimenter, and he fitted up a private laboratory at his house in Tunstall where he continued his trials and researches in the chemistry of pottery to the end of his life. There is ample evidence of the success he attained in this direction when we consider the excellence of his jasper ware and the fine earthenwares of various kinds, for all of which he soon secured an extensive and lucrative foreign trade. He travelled a good deal in pursuit of his business, both in England and on the Continent, for he made several extended journeys of investigation and business combined, from which he evidently derived a great amount of pleasure. There is an interesting account, in one of his diaries, of a tour through Denmark and North Germany in company with his brother-in-law, Mr. Daniel, which occupied several months of

¹ Several deeds relating to various properties were executed between Josiah Wedgwood and William Adams; one as late as August 11th, 1792.

the year 1797, and which was fortunately reprinted in the family history published nearly twenty years ago.¹

The Adams jasper ware has some well-marked features which usually serve to differentiate it from that of the other eminent makers. Some of the ground colours differ perceptibly from those invented by Wedgwood, or at least from those which he generally used. The applied ornament, too, though of the type which Wedgwood and Bentley had made so familiar, is sufficiently distinct in the style of modelling as well as in the treatment of the designs—figures, draperies, and conventional borders—to have won it a well-deserved reputation. William Adams was a skilful modeller who practised the art assiduously, and in the family history which has just been mentioned a list is given of the principal subjects which he is known to have modelled. This list deserves careful consideration by all who are interested in such details, for his work proves that he possessed an uncommon degree of skill and taste, so that one can perfectly understand why his descendants have been wishful to choose these examples for reproduction as representing the best work of their distinguished ancestor. Joseph Monglott, a Swiss artist of some repute who settled in England in 1785, became the chief working modeller at the factory, and he is said to have designed many of the border patterns which were used on the Adams's jasper ware. The majority of these are excellently spaced and proportioned, and display a spice of novelty. On the whole, the more characteristic designs found on the Adams's examples

¹ "William Adams, an Old English Potter." London: Chapman & Hall, Ltd., 1904



JARDINIÈRE

Earthenware. "Pearl" body.
Rich brown ground and gilding
Height $4\frac{1}{2}$ in., width $8\frac{5}{8}$ in.
Victoria and Albert Museum.

are more fanciful and less balanced than the similar work made at Etruria, though they are always interesting and often spontaneous and fresh. The connoisseur may find a source of interest that is all but inexhaustible in a comparative examination of the treatment given to the figures, draperies, and ornamental borders which appear on the contemporary examples made by Wedgwood and Bentley, Adams,¹ Palmer and Neale, and Turner, for each kind possesses merits of its own as well as characteristic and distinguishing features.

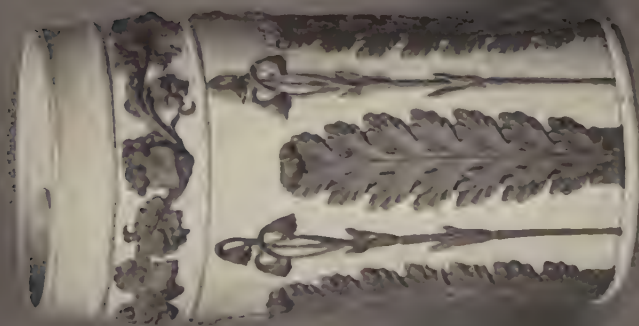
Black basalt—or the black Egyptian ware, as it was often called—was also manufactured by Adams, and the quality of his productions in this material is unsurpassed. It may be helpful to some collectors who own specimens of the Staffordshire black basalt of this period if a sentence or two is interpolated as to the care of such treasures. It has often been stated that the sheen of the finest pieces was obtained by polishing in the lathe after firing, as a lapidary polishes agates and other hard stones. The effect of such polishing is often to be seen on the shanks of seals, on the faces of seals to be mounted as signets, and pieces of a similar kind, but it produces a different surface quality from that found on the figures, busts, and those examples which are decorated with applied ornament, and which could hardly have been polished by mechanical means except at a prohibitive cost. The only polishing I have known such pieces to undergo before they left the works is a careful scrubbing with soft soap and fine sand, and when

¹ The modern jasper wares made by John Adams & Co., and by Adams & Bromley (who had worked at Etruria), of Hanley, *circa* 1870-85 or later, should not be confounded with the vastly superior productions of Adams of Greengates and his successors.

this has been thoroughly carried out and the piece has been dried it is sometimes rubbed with milk and an old silk rag. At all events, I can recommend this method to any collector as one which he may follow, as required, to the great advantage of his specimens.

Adams also excelled in the cream stonewares, in which he made large quantities of jugs, mugs, and loving cups, as well as more important flagons and wine coolers. These are decorated with subjects in relief in the same colour as the body of the piece, of the sporting and drinking subjects which were most affected by the Staffordshire potters of the time. The brown bands applied to the shoulders or necks of these pieces are glazed; but the portions left white, while perfectly vitreous, are less glossy than the stonewares made by Mayer and others, which often have a "smear" of glaze on the white portions. It is stated that Adams invariably finished his pieces with bands of brown or black, as he did not consider the blue or other colours used by some of his contemporaries suited to this kind of pottery. Adams must have been the most extensive maker of this kind of pottery in Staffordshire at the end of the eighteenth century, as when the Turners of Longton retired from business he is said to have secured the bulk of their trade.

An old Staffordshire method of decoration which was freely used by Adams is what is commonly called in the district "Mocha" ware, because it displays dendritic or fernlike markings like those found in Mocha stones or moss agates. This elementary decoration arose out of the methods of the old slip-potter, and it has enjoyed a longer life than most of his devices, for the method



SPELL VASE

Red relief on buff ground
Mark: Impressed WEDGWOOD
Height 3½ in.



VOLTAIRE

White jasper. Pedestal of black
basalt. Mark under the shoulder,
impressed WEDGWOOD
Height 4¾ in.



BELL-PULL

Blue and white jasper
Height 2¾ in.

is still practised for decorating the drinking mugs used in the ale-houses of many country districts. The technique of the device is simple enough: when a clay vessel has been turned in the lathe a thin coat of slip is easily applied, and if, before this dries, drops of finely ground oxide of manganese in water are applied to the wet surface from a brush or a small pipette, they spread through the moist slip in dendritic or fernlike forms and retain these shapes after the ware has been dried and fired. With care and skill it is possible to make a pleasing surface-pattern in this way, but the method has seldom been used for anything more elaborate than these common drinking mugs. Such things are still freely manufactured by a few potters, and specimens may be found exposed for sale in any country fair or market-place.

Blue-printed earthenwares became an important branch of the manufactures of the Adams's factories, for the family as a whole must have been the most extensive makers of "blue-printed" after 1775 or 1785, when they owned so many works in the district from Tunstall to Stoke-on-Trent. Their printed earthenwares were deservedly popular, for the patterns were always well engraved, while the blue colour in which they were mostly printed was used in various bright and agreeable shades. The ware gained such a reputation that it was soon in demand wherever English earthenware was used and large collections of it are treasured to this day among the older families in the United States and Canada. Choice representative collections will be found in the various museums of the "Five Towns," and there are a number of typical specimens in the

British and the Victoria and Albert Museums. The individual pieces are so well "potted" and the blue printing is so sharp and clear that the Adams's earthenware has always been in great demand, and its popularity, fortunately, shows no sign of approaching exhaustion.

I borrow from "Staffordshire Pots and Potters," by G. W. and F. A. Rhead, a table of the Adams family which is of interest as a memorandum of names and dates :

1. William Adams of Greengates	1745-1805.
2. William Adams of the Brick House and Cobridge	1748-1831.
3. William Adams of Stoke-on-Trent	1772-1829.
4. William Adams of Greenfields	1798-1865.

The first three were cousins and the last two father and son, and while the two first-mentioned families are extinct, the descendants of the other two are still conducting the factories of Greengates and Greenfields.

Marks : ADAMS, W. ADAMS & SON, W. A & S., W. A & CO., impressed and printed.

Just as the Adams family were migrants who settled in North Staffordshire from the adjacent county of Salop, the Wood family, which boasts so many distinguished modellers and potters among its sons, settled in Burslem very early in the eighteenth century from a hamlet called Cheddleton, which nestles in the moorlands beyond Leek and bordering on Derbyshire. The first of this family who appears in Burslem, Ralph Wood, born at Cheddleton in 1676, was a prosperous corn miller, and it gives one a vivid idea of the rapid develop-

ment of the pottery industry in Staffordshire during the eighteenth century when we attempt to trace the history and activities of his many descendants who became well known as working potters, modellers, or manufacturers. With natural variations in detail, the broad outlines of the history of the Woods, Wedgwoods, Turners, Adams, Spodes, Minton, and many another family of more than local fame are remarkably similar, and it is to the energy and enterprise combined with marked technical and commercial aptitude displayed by these men that England owes the remarkable development of this local industry during the eighteenth century.

To return to Ralph Wood,¹ the corn miller. His two elder sons, Ralph Wood (1715-72) and Aaron Wood (1717-85), are both famous in the annals of Staffordshire pottery making, and it may be mentioned as an introduction to their activities that the second Ralph Wood has another claim to the attention and interest of all Wedgwood students, inasmuch as he married a daughter of Aaron Wedgwood named Mary, who was a cousin of Sarah Wedgwood of Spen Green, the wife of Josiah Wedgwood.

Ralph Wood entered on his career as a master potter by renting one of the factories in Burslem which belonged to Thomas and John Wedgwood, the relatives from whom Josiah Wedgwood likewise rented a factory, as we have seen. Thus it came about that these two were neighbours and friends at a time when they were both young and full of energy, and they remained friends, though

¹ Every student of our eighteenth-century pottery is, surely, familiar with the delightful work by Mr. Frank Falkner, "The Wood Family of Burslem." London: Chapman & Hall, Ltd., 1912.

their careers carried them so far apart in the work to which they set their hands. There is in existence a modelled group generally known as "Ralph Wood and his Son" (*see* No. 28, Plate VII, "The Wood Family of Burslem"), and though some doubt has been cast on this ascription, I for one am inclined to accept it as correct. The work, in any case, is an able and characteristic piece of modelling in the style of other figures and groups which are always accepted as the work of Ralph Wood.

In the museum at the Etruria works there is an invoice, dated November 16th, 1783, for a number of figures, groups, animals, sater (satyr) head drink cups, and cream ewers supplied to Josiah and Thomas Wedgwood (for the "useful" branch of their business), probably, that they might complete some of their country orders. This list has been reprinted by Mr. Frank Falkner and others for its interest as an indication of the range of Ralph Wood's ordinary productions. Another note, similarly preserved, is dated October 19th, 1784, but has an interest of another kind. It runs :

MR. THO. WEDGWOOD.

SIR,—I should esteem it a great favour to settle the Note I delivered with the Flowerpots by the Week End which was Dectd—£3 16—my Necessities oblige me or should not have ask'd so soon, at the same time I thank you for your goodness in promoting my Trade, hoping I may still be favor'd with your future orders in my Way, which will be gratefully acknowledged by

Sir, your obliged humble Servant,

RALPH WOOD.

Ralph Wood is believed to have been the first among the makers of the Staffordshire figures to use his signa-

JASPER WARE SAUCERS

Diameter $4\frac{7}{8}$ in.

Diameter $4\frac{3}{4}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.



ture as a mark of identification, for they generally bear the impressed mark R. WOOD or *Ra. Wood*
Burslem, while there is often, though not invariably, an impressed mould number in addition.

Aaron Wood,¹ the younger brother, who became the most famous and expert block-cutter and modeller of his generation, was apprenticed in 1731 to Dr. Thomas Wedgwood of Burslem, the well-known "salt-glaze" potter. The apprenticeship indenture runs that he was to be taught "the art, trade, mystery and occupation of a potter to learn, that is to say, turning in the lathe, handling and trimming (throwing on the wheel being out of this indenture excepted)." At the conclusion of this term, in 1738, Aaron Wood continued to work for Dr. Thomas Wedgwood at a weekly wage of five shillings for a further period of five years. In 1743 he engaged himself to John Mitchell, another salt-glaze potter, for a term of seven years; this time at the rate of seven shillings a week and half a guinea, earnest money, every November 11th (Martinmas, the traditional hiring day in Staffordshire, and a date at which wages are still generally settled among the potters). At the expiration of this term Aaron Wood commenced to work on his own account as a block-cutter and modeller, and he had already gained such a reputation for his skill that when he was engaged by Thomas Whieldon he could stipulate that he should work only in a private room which he could keep locked, so that he might retain the secrets

¹ An excellent reproduction of the portrait of Aaron Wood, which was painted by William Caddick, of Liverpool, in 1747, will be found in Plate xxiv of Mr. Frank Falkner's "The Wood Family of Burslem."

of his methods. Here he is believed to have devised and cut the models of some of the tea and coffee-pots, melon and other table plates, pickle leaves, sweetmeat trays and pieces of that order for which the Whieldon factory became so famous.

There are preserved in the collections of the British and the Victoria and Albert Museums a number of the original pitcher blocks, from which the plaster-of-Paris moulds used in shaping the actual pottery were made, which bear the name, Aaron Wood, inscribed in full; while the pitcher block for a small milk jug bears the letters R. W. (probably for Ralph Wood) on two flat patches on its opposite sides over which the feet would be attached. The large collection of such blocks and moulds possessed by the Victoria and Albert Museum—which was greatly enriched by the examples from Enoch Wood's historic collection transferred from the Jermyn Street Museum—must always remain a source of extreme interest to students, inasmuch as one can see and examine there the actual block-work of these skilled modellers alongside the pieces of pottery manufactured from it at the time.

Aaron Wood married Mary Meir and they had eight children. The eldest son was William Wood (1748–1808), so well known as the modeller of the useful wares at Etruria for Wedgwood and Bentley, while the youngest son was Enoch Wood (1759–1840), a successful potter and public-spirited citizen who is also memorable as the first systematic collector of the older Staffordshire pottery, and for this he deserves to be held in grateful remembrance by all who are interested in the history and development of the art in that district.



VOLTAIRE

Cane body

Mark: WEDGWOOD & BENTLEY

Height $12\frac{1}{2}$ in., base $4\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Falcke Collection, British Museum.

Enoch Wood seems to have followed the family calling from childhood, as there is in the British Museum a glazed cream-ware plaque bearing the arms and crest of the Wood family in modelled relief. On the back is a painted inscription (one surmises painted by Enoch Wood at some later date): "These arms were modelled by Enoch Wood, A.D. 1771, being then in the 12th year of his age—signed William Wood—This piece was found in the possession of Wm. Wood, Modeller, after his decease, with the above memorandum in his handwriting in ink, and is now in 1821 thus transcribed more durably—This Arms was copied from a rough drawing found in the wall of Chedleton Church, then said to be Wood's Arms."

Enoch Wood appears to have spent a little while in acquiring the rudiments of the potter's trade at the Burslem works of Wedgwood and Bentley when he was still very young, though he was not apprenticed to them but to H. Palmer of Hanley Green, and worked under that potter until he set up on his own account at the age of twenty-four. His record as a manufacturer is one of sustained interest and growing commercial success, but, in addition, he became a notable figure in the public and industrial life of the district and was always eager to be of service in any cause which he conceived to be for the benefit of the population or industries of "The Potteries."

Three years before he set up in business—viz. 16th December, 1780—he married Miss Ann Bourne, daughter of Mr. James Bourne, attorney, of Newcastle-under-Lyme. They were destined to enjoy a long period of married happiness, and while Enoch Wood died on

August 17th, 1840, his widow only survived to January 28th, 1841. They had a family of eight daughters and four sons, but the surviving sons appear to have relinquished the business after the death of Enoch Wood. The business and works at Burslem were sold to the firm of Pinder, Bourne & Hope (for whom Lockwood Kipling, father of Rudyard Kipling, was at one time art director), and this firm was ultimately absorbed by Sir Henry Doulton when that famous potter established the Burslem branch of his business for the manufacture of china and fine earthenware especially.

In the course of his long and busy career Enoch Wood evidently manufactured all the kinds of pottery that were made in North Staffordshire at that epoch, for besides becoming a manufacturer of earthenware and jasper ware on a large scale he made bone-china and a white stoneware, which was generally overlaid with a slip-ground of turquoise or bright cobalt-blue and ornamented with figures of cupids, festoons of flowers and the like in relief, the whole being glazed.¹ He also manufactured some black basalt ware of good quality, though not so extensively (except for the busts of Wesley, Whitfield, and other Methodist divines) as the productions already mentioned, for black basalt does not seem to have been so popular during the first half of the nineteenth century as it had been for half a century before.

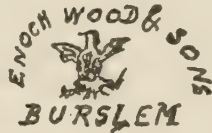
Speaking generally, I should rank Enoch Wood's manufactures as representing the good, sound, average production of his times. One can hardly say that he

¹ See "The Wood Family of Burslem" (l.c.). Plates XL-XLIII.

attained to any marked distinction as a potter or as an artist, or that his contributions to the progress of the industry were of outstanding merit. He fills a position just below the first rank admirably, for he was an energetic, industrious, painstaking man who made the best of conditions as they were, paid his way cheerfully, and did all that lay in his power for what he conceived to be the good of his family, his neighbours and his native district, so that one can well understand why he was so generally and affectionately called "The Father of the Potteries."

Marks :

ENOCH WOOD . ENOCH WOOD & CO . WOOD & CALDWELL
BURSTON



Josiah Spode has been mentioned several times, as he was one of the group of potters trained by Whieldon who afterwards rose to eminence in the trade. He was born in 1733, and it is amusing to note the first entries of weekly wages under his name in Whieldon's account books, as they were published by Ll. Jewitt :—

	1749	£	s.	d.
April 9.	Hired Siah Spode, to give him from this time to Martelmas next 2s. 3d., or 2s. 6d. if he Deserves it.			
2d year	. . . . .	0	2	9
3d year	. . . . .	0	3	3
Pd. full earnest	. . . . .	0	1	0

Spode was hired by Whieldon for two further periods till 1754, and for the last year he was paid at the rate

of seven shillings and sixpence a week, with the unusually large earnest of £1 11s. 6d., so that he must have been a first-rate workman. He was married during this time as Josiah Spode II was born in 1754. About 1770 Spode entered on the occupation of a works at Stoke-on-Trent, formerly conducted by Turner and Bankes (*see* p. 151), and as he had been trained in a famous school and was skilful and energetic he soon became a successful and thriving manufacturer. He was one of the first in Staffordshire to turn his attention to the possibilities of blue printing (underglaze), a process which had proved its worth at Caughley and Coalport. Blue-printed ware could be sold more cheaply than the overglaze printed ware in red, brown and black, as no second fire in the enamel kiln was required to fix the pattern. The process was immediately successful in Spode's hands, and he must have reaped a considerable harvest from it before it was largely adopted by his neighbours. His first patterns were echoes of the Oriental patterns found on the so-called "Nankin China," and Spode's successors, the present-day firm of W. T. Copeland & Sons, still carry on the tradition in a fine series of blue-printed earthenware services of all kinds, among which Spode's "Tower" pattern enjoys its measure of popularity.

The rapid development of Spode's business was due to the quality of his blue-printed earthenwares, and their sale was greatly extended by the activities of Mr. William Copeland, a native of Stoke-on-Trent, then residing in London and engaged as a traveller in the tea trade. Copeland undertook to sell Spode's pottery among his customers, the retail tea-dealers of London and the provinces. This enterprise succeeded, and Cope-

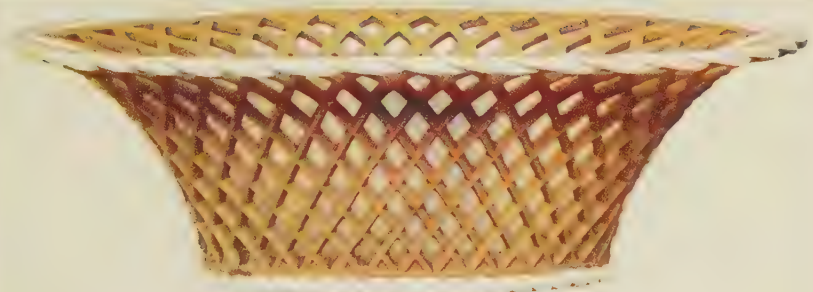
PERFORATED BASKET AND STAND

In Jasper Ware

Basket—Height $1\frac{1}{2}$ in., width $4\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Stand—Diameter $4\frac{3}{4}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.



land opened a warehouse in Fore Street, in the City of London, where he sold all the Spode productions. This in its turn succeeded, and Copeland became a partner in the Spode business, and in 1779 they purchased a house, 37 Lincoln's Inn Fields, and behind it, in Portugal Street,¹ they opened a warehouse for the sale of Spode and Copeland's pottery. For some time the elder Spode conducted the factory, and his son Josiah II worked in the London agency with Mr. Copeland.

When the elder Spode died in 1797, his son returned to Stoke to manage the factory, and soon proved himself a worthy successor to his father by the skill with which he maintained and extended the branches of manufacture in which his father had excelled. His best original work was done in connexion with his introduction of the manufacture of bone-china at the Stoke factory, for it is to the labours of the second Josiah Spode that a considerable measure of the successful working out of the composition of the modern English china body is due. The first improvement in the body of his chinaware is said to have resulted from the substitution of pure felspar for a proportion of the china stone previously used, so that the finished ware became richer in tone and quality, for it was solidly translucent without being too "glassy" and thin looking. These technical improvements, supported as they were by the excellent "potting" for which the firm was noted, quickly made Spode a formidable rival of the older porcelain factories, Worcester, Derby and Coalport (to

¹ This warehouse covered the site of Davenant's old theatre, which became famous as the scene of Garrick's first appearance and of the first performance of *The Beggar's Opera*, which has enjoyed another London success while these pages were being written.

which the Caughley business had recently been transferred by John Rose), the chief survivors from the spacious days of the eighteenth century. In 1805 Spode made another departure by the introduction of "ironstone china," a hard, white earthenware of the type which was afterwards rendered so popular by the Masons of Lane Delph (Fenton), that it largely displaced for a time the old cream-colour.

Apropos of Spode's china, I cannot refrain from directing the reader's attention to the opinions so judiciously expressed by that famous authority the late M. L. Solon¹ on the historically important question of the settlement of the composition of our English china body and Spode's share in that matter. He says :

"One hundred years have gone since Josiah Spode, second of the name, breaking away from technical routine, composed a new china body which united the advantages of the soft and hard porcelain. From the nature of its chief constituent it received the vulgar name of 'Bone China.' Modern manufacturers scarcely seem to realize what they owe to the invention, and what gratitude they should entertain toward the inventor. His name could not occupy too high a place in the annals of the Staffordshire Potteries. Unlike so many improvements which, after being acclaimed and adopted by all, live only long enough to be displaced by some other novelty, this evergreen 'bone china' has remained unaltered ever since the first pieces of it came out of Spode's oven, and nothing indicates that it will be superseded for a long time to come."

That Spode's china should have displayed in its decorations a close resemblance to the styles of the contemporary Crown-Derby china is natural, as so many of his decorators had previously worked at Derby. This affiliation is shown in many ways, in the elaborate

¹ "History of Old English Porcelain." M. L. Solon. Bemrose & Sons, Ltd., London and Derby, 1903.



FEEDING-CUP AND COFFEE POT AND STRAINER

“Pearl” Ware

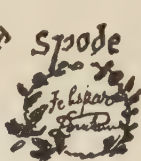
Feeding-Cup—Length $7\frac{1}{4}$ in., height (from spout) 2 in.

Coffee Pot—Height $6\frac{3}{4}$ in., diameter $4\frac{3}{4}$ in.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

vases made in the Stoke factory (notably the three examples presented to the Victoria and Albert Museum by Miss Spode, the last direct representative of the family) no less than in the successful adaptations of the ever-popular Crown-Derby Japan patterns, though many of Spode's patterns were adapted directly from Japanese examples that he acquired for the purpose. When Spode was entering on the manufacture of china the Crown-Derby factory was under a cloud of commercial depression accentuated by mismanagement, so that an enterprising rival, whose situation was in some ways more advantageous, was in a position to secure the steady patronage of the wholesale dealers and shopkeepers, especially when he could offer a better article at the same price.

The Spode productions of this time, whether in earthenware or china, were excellently made and of the best material, but the decorations, popular as they proved at the time, are thoroughly representative of the period and find few admirers among writers on æsthetics. All our china factories seem to have been obsessed by two foreign styles in the forms and decorations they gave to their productions. First, the Greek vase, robbed of its purity of line and covered all over with bright colour and lavish, heavy gilding, and as an alternative the "Japan" patterns with their informal patches of rich blue, bright red and gold, a style which was as freely used at Spode's factory as if it had been the latest novelty in pottery decoration. All very sad and very bad, but more tolerable to live with than the unrestrained pranks of *L'art nouveau* by which they have been replaced in our generation.

*Marks :**Spode* **SPODE****SPODE**
Felspar Porcelain.

The completion of the Staffordshire Canal caused a number of potters to establish works along its course from about 1773, and the most northerly group of these was at Longport, above and below the bridge that carried the Burslem-Newcastle road over the canal. One of these factories was opened by John Brindley, brother of the famous James Brindley who had constructed the waterway, and in 1794 a John Davenport, previously in partnership with a potter named Woolfe who had a works near the centre of Stoke-on-Trent, took over this factory at Longport and settled there. The first John Davenport was a man of great activity and enterprise, for the business became one of the most extensive of its time in Staffordshire. His productions were more than usually diverse, for in addition to a great manufacture of earthenware and china, he also carried on, for a few years after 1797, the preparation of litharge and white lead for the use of potters and glass makers, while in 1801 he commenced to make glass and manufactured table-glass on a scale comparable with the old-established glass houses about Stourbridge. There appears to have been no limits to his ambitions, for he also produced large windows of stained and painted glass, and in 1805 retained Fuseli, the painter, to design such windows and to supervise the artists and glass painters who were employed at the works. The records



MARRIAGE OF CUPID AND PSYCHE

White on blue jasper

Height $2\frac{7}{8}$ in., width $3\frac{1}{2}$ in.



"AM I NOT A MAN
AND A BROTHER"

Cane Ware, black relief

Height $3\frac{3}{4}$ in., width $3\frac{1}{4}$ in.

British Museum.



TERPSICHORE

White on black
Jasper Ware

Height $3\frac{5}{8}$ in., width $2\frac{7}{8}$ in.

of these windows appear to have been lost or destroyed, but it is certain that a considerable number of elaborate windows were made for churches and country mansions, and they were considered of some importance at the time.

Other artists of note were also engaged at this factory, and one or two of them should be mentioned. Joshua Christall, who served his apprenticeship here, became a well-known painter in water-colours and President of the Society of Painters in Water-colour. I am unaware of any identified work by Christall that was done for Davenport, but my friend, the late G. Woolliscroft Rhead, was of opinion that the figures on a service of New Hall china that had been handed down in his family were painted by Christall.¹ James Holland, who is so well known for his water-colour drawings of Venice, also served his apprenticeship as a china-painter at the factory, and it would be a matter of some little interest were we able to identify the work he did as a pot-painter in his youthful days.

In spite of these ambitious efforts and the co-operation of such artists, the Davenport examples of earthenware and china have little claim to artistic merit. The material is always excellent in body and glaze, the manufacture and workmanship are as good as need be, while the painting and gilding are rich and elaborate, for they recall the work of the Crown-Derby china factory in its palmy days; yet, with all this skill and ambition, I have never seen a specimen of Davenport porcelain that I should wish to possess.

That the Prince Regent and the Duke of Clarence,

¹ "Staffordshire Pots and Potters" (l.c.), pp. 281-2.

afterwards George IV and William IV respectively, patronized the Davenports and visited the factory on one occasion in the course of a tour to the north of England tells us something of the reputation enjoyed by the firm at the time—though, unfortunately, it was a time that has left us little to boast about in the art of pottery. Davenport was honoured, perhaps as a result of this visit, with a commission to manufacture the service that was used at the coronation banquet of King William IV, and it is said that the crown which was afterwards used as a mark on the Davenport pottery and porcelain owes its appearance to this circumstance.

The reputation of the Davenport earthenware and china was widely spread, for the firm secured a great foreign trade with North and South America, as well as with various countries of continental Europe. The firm opened a depot and showrooms in the free port of Hamburg as a centre for their extensive trade in Eastern Europe, and it is of some little interest to note that a German house carried on this depot under the name of Davenport and Company and maintained an extensive trade in pottery, porcelain, and table-glass, and when I last visited Hamburg, just before 1914, was one of the most important houses of its kind in that city.

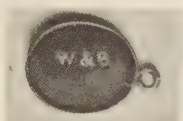
John Davenport retired from the management of affairs about 1830, and the business was carried on by the second son Henry Davenport and the youngest son William. Henry Davenport died in 1835, and the business was then continued by William Davenport under the title of W. Davenport & Co. On the death



Imitation Chinese
mark on red ware
Teapot of Elers
style



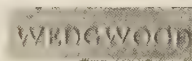
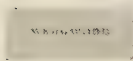
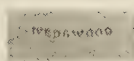
Imitation Chinese
mark with im-
pressed W on a
red Teapot



Wedgwood & Bentley



Wedgwood & Bentley



SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL WEDGWOOD MARKS

of William Davenport in 1869 the business was continued by his only son Henry Davenport until it came to an end shortly after 1880, for the last Henry Davenport seems to have left affairs too much in the hands of managers.

As the wares were distinctly marked DAVENPORT or DAVENPORT,
LONGPORT, often with the addition of an anchor, and in the later years with a crown, they may be readily identified. On many pieces words 30 CANNING PLACE LIVERPOOL, 82 FLEET STREET LONDON, encircled by a garter bearing the words DAVENPORT LONGPORT STAFFORD^{RE}, and similar legends which are quite distinctive, appear. In many cases the mark is both impressed and printed.

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